



SPORT AND IDENTITY IN ANCIENT GREECE

Zinon Papakonstantinou



Sport and Identity in Ancient Greece

From the eighth century BCE to the late third century CE, Greeks trained in sport and competed in periodic contests that generated enormous popular interest. As a result, sport was an ideal vehicle for the construction of a plurality of identities along the lines of ethnic origin, civic affiliation, legal and social status as well as gender.

Sport and Identity in Ancient Greece delves into the rich literary and epigraphic record on ancient Greek sport and examines, through a series of case studies, diverse aspects of the process of identity construction through sport. Chapters discuss elite identities and sport, sport spectatorship, the regulatory framework of Greek sport, sport and benefaction in the Hellenistic and Roman world, embodied and gendered identities in epigraphic commemoration, as well as the creation of a hybrid culture of Greco-Roman sport in the eastern Mediterranean during the Roman imperial period.

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Preface

This book has been a long time in the making. I should emphasize at the very outset that the final product does not aim to be an overview of ancient Greek sport or even a comprehensive coverage of identity construction and representation through Greek sport. And I am certainly not claiming to be the first one to tackle such issues: as my discussion and the extensive references to works of other scholars makes clear, aspects of Greek sport and identities have been fruitfully discussed in recent years. My aim, instead, is quite modest: to build upon that earlier scholarship with the objective of complementing (and hopefully enriching) the debate through a critical discussion of facets of the sport/identities trajectory that either have not been adequately examined, or that could be revisited through the lens of novel perspectives. I begin with an extensive introductory chapter (Chapter 1) – perhaps more detailed than what a reader would normally expect from a research monograph. The reason for this choice is directly related to the variety of themes discussed in the book – I simply wanted to give the reader a taste of this diversity of topics and how they interconnect to the overarching theme of identity as well as enough content to decide what parts are more germane to his or her interests.

The remainder of the book consists of five chapters and an epilogue, with each chapter subdivided into several sections. The choice of themes under discussion might appear arbitrary, especially to the reader not familiar with recent scholarship on ancient Greek sport. In a way indeed it is, as most themes were picked not on the basis of some wider organizational principle – other than the overarching connection to sport and identities – but as a result of my personal research interests as developed over the years. As a result, some parts of the book (especially some sections in Chapters 2 and 5) are re-elaborations of my past scholarship. These I have attempted to enrich with fresh ideas and scholarship. The remainder I have written more recently and exclusively for this book. Throughout the book I attempted to infuse, whenever possible, comparative material or borrow analytical categories and terminology developed in other cognate to history fields (mainly anthropology and sociology), if I felt that in doing so would illuminate my discussion without deviating from the picture that the ancient evidence suggests. All in all, through a number of case studies ranging chronologically from the Archaic

to the Imperial periods, I hope that at the very least this book showcases the multivocality and reflexivity of Greek sport and identities.

As with any book written over a number of years, I have accumulated many debts. Throughout my career I have profited tremendously from the generosity and knowledge of colleagues in the field of ancient Greek sport, especially Sinclair Bell, Paul Christesen, Wolfgang Decker, Mark Golden, Donald Kyle, Christian Mann, Thomas Heine Nielsen, Thomas Scanlon, Charles Stocking and Ingomar Weiler. Some of these colleagues have heard or read earlier versions of arguments made in this book in lectures, conference papers or published work and they provided valuable feedback. Most importantly, they have all been constant sources of intellectual stimulation, support and camaraderie. Whatever is of value in this book owes much to their individual and collective wisdom, but I am solely to blame for any remaining deficiencies. Beyond the Greek sport community, I would also like to thank Paul Cartledge and Werner Riess, for their long-standing support and assistance with intellectual and professional matters, some related to the writing of this book.

My greatest debt, however, is once again to my wife, Elif, my indefatigable intellectual and travelling companion on the long road to writing this book. Time and again she cheerfully and unstintingly brought in her own expertise and comparative outlook on cultural practices and representations in our countless discussions of Greek sport at home or in the field – for all this, as well as for her *philandria* and *philomathia*, she is my choice of a victor's *stephanos*.

Abbreviations

Unless otherwise noted, abbreviations of ancient authors and their works, as well as of Classics periodicals, are from E. Eidinow, S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth (eds.), *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*,⁴ Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. If an abbreviation for an ancient source or modern journal was not available in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* then I used the abbreviations in H.G. Liddell and R. Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*,⁹ Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996 (for ancient authors and their works) or I have left the title unabbreviated (for periodicals).

- CIL: *Corpus inscriptionum Latinarum*, Berlin: G. Reimerum, 1893–.
- CIG: A. Boeckh (ed.), *Corpus inscriptionum graecarum*, vol. I–IV, Berlin: Officina Academika 1828–1877.
- Clara Rhodos: *Clara Rhodos. Studi e materiali pubblicati a cura dell' Istituto storico-archeologico di Rodi*, 10 vols, Rhodes: Istituto Storico-Archeologico, 1928–1941.
- EFT: B. İplikçiöğlu et al., *Epigraphische Forschungen in Termessos und seinem Territorium*, Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1991–.
- FD III: *Fouilles de Delphes, III. Épigraphie*, Fasc. 1–6, Paris: de Boccard, 1909–.
- FGrH: F. Jacoby et al., *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*, Berlin: Weidmann and Leiden: Brill, 1923–.
- FdXanthos: A. Balland, *Inscriptions d'époque impériale du Létôon*, Fouilles de Xanthos vo. 7, Paris: Éditions Klincksieck, 1981.
- IC: M. Guarducci, *Inscriptiones Creticae*, 4 vols, Rome: Libreria dello Stato, 1935–1950.
- ID: *Inscriptions de Délos*, 7 vols, Paris: H. Champion, 1926–1972.
- I.Didyma: A. Rehm, *Didyma, II. Die Inschriften*, Berlin: G. Mann, 1958.
- I.Kaunos: C. Marek, *Die Inschriften von Kaunos*, Munich: C. H. Beck, 2006.
- ILS: H. Dessau, *Inscriptiones Latinae selectae*, 3 vols., Berlin: Weidmann, 1892–1916.
- I.Magnesia: O. Kern, *Die Inschriften von Magnesia am Maeander*, Berlin: W. Spemann, 1900.
- IG: *Inscriptiones Graecae*, Berlin: G. Reimer/de Gruyter, 1873–.

- IGBulg I²: G. Mihailov (ed.), *Inscriptiones graecae in Bulgaria repertae*, Vol. 1, *Inscriptiones orae Ponti Euxini*², Sofia: Academiae Litterarum Bulgaricae, 1970.
- IGI: *Iscrizioni greche d'Italia*, Rome: Quasar Edizioni, 1984–.
- IGR: René Cagnat et al., *Inscriptiones graecae ad res romanas pertinentes*, 4 vols., Paris: E. Leroux, 1906–1927.
- IK: *Inchriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien*, Bonn: R.Habelt, 1972–.
- I.Miletus: G. Kawerau, A. Rehm et al., *Das Delphinion in Milet*, Berlin: G. Reimer, 1914.
- IosPE I²: B. Latyshev (ed.), *Inscriptiones antiquae orae septentrionalis Ponti Euxini graecae et latinae*, vol. 1, 2nd edn., *Inscriptiones Tyriae, Olbiae, Chersonesi Tauricae*, St. Petersburg: Academiae Imperialis Scientiarum, 1916.
- I.Pergamon: M. Fränkel, *Die Inschriften von Pergamon*, vol. I–II, Berlin: W. Spemann, 1890–1895.
- IScM II: I. Stoian, *Inscriptiones Daciae et Scythiae Minoris antiquae. Series altera: Inscriptiones Scythiae Minoris graecae et latinae*. Vol. 2: *Tomis et territorium*, Bucharest: Editura Academici Republicii Socialiste Romania, 1987.
- *Iscr. di Cos*: M. Segre, *Iscrizioni di Cos*, Rome: “L’Erma” di Bretschneider, 1993.
- IvO: W. Dittenberger and K. Purgold, *Die Inschriften von Olympia*, Berlin: von A. Asher & Co, 1896.
- MAMA: W.M. Calder, E. Herzfeld, S. Guyer and C.W.M. Cox (eds.), *Monumenta Asiae Minoris antiqua*, London: Longmans, Green, 1928–.
- MDAI(A): *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Athenische Abteilung*.
- NAMA: National Archaeological Museum of Athens.
- NSER: A. Mauri, *Nuova silloge epigrafica di Rodi e Cos*, Firenze: F. Le Monnier, 1925.
- OGIS: W. Dittenberger, *Orientis Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae*, Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1903–1905.
- P.Oxy.: *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, London: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1898–.
- SEG: *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*, Leiden: Brill, 1923–1971 then Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben, 1979–.
- SIG: W. Dittenberger, *Sylloge inscriptionum graecarum*³, Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1915–1924.
- TAM: E. Kalinka et al., *Tituli Asiae Minoris*, Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1901–.

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Introduction

Greek sport and identities

In book 27 of his *Histories* Polybius (27.9.7–13) recounts the well-known story of the Olympic boxing final of 212 BCE. One of the finalists was Kleitomachos of Thebes, Olympic boxing and *pankration* champion in 216 BCE and admittedly the most accomplished combat sport athlete of his day. His opponent was Aristonikos from Egypt, a rather unknown athlete and possibly an Olympic rookie who, we are told by Polybius, was sponsored by king Ptolemy IV Philopator with the goal of defeating the formidable Kleitomachos. Polybius maintains that at the beginning of the fight spectators at Olympia supported the underdog Aristonikos, but then Kleitomachos addressed the crowd and wondered why were they supporting an Egyptian who was fighting for king Ptolemy against a Theban who was fighting for the honor of Greece? This put the crowd to shame who cheered Kleitomachos and pushed him to his second consecutive Olympic boxing crown.

This episode touches on some intriguing facets of ancient Greek sport, including issues of identity, difference and recognition. The extensive network of athletic facilities and competitions in the ancient Greek world as well as the popularity that Greek sport enjoyed until late antiquity are well-documented. Furthermore, the subject of Greek sport has attracted considerable scholarly attention since antiquity. Renaissance humanists were followed by eighteenth and nineteenth-century classicists who established a presence in the field through numerous, and at times commercially successful, publications on ancient (mainly Greek) sport.¹

However, it is only in the last 40 years that a systematic study of Greco-Roman sport from an analytical, as opposed to fact-establishing, perspective has emerged. Earlier generations of scholars working on the subject of Greek sport were for the most part concerned with collecting and collating the evidence and “setting the record straight.” This effort, praiseworthy in many respects, was often marred with biases, e.g. the promotion of the idea of sport amateurism as a genuine ancient Greek practice or misconceptions regarding the ancient Olympic truce. Hence during the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s much effort has been expended in trying to dispel misrepresentations and myths and “set the record straight” again, this time vis-à-vis an earlier generation of scholarship.² Parallel to these more recent scholarly endeavors, there was an ongoing attempt by sectors of the ancient Greek sport field to communicate with other cognate

subfields, especially historians and social scientists working on the subject of modern sport. Many among the latter have made great advances in our assessment of sport as a social and cultural phenomenon by using carefully constructed, sophisticated analytical models.³ The level of engagement of ancient sport historians with methodological developments in cognate disciplines, especially social and cultural theory, is crucial. At the present juncture, this constitutes one of the most viable and promising routes: as the field of ancient sport progresses and the possibilities of renewed debates on the basis of the extant evidence diminish, the need to map out additional avenues of interpretative and comparative research becomes a necessity.

The concept of identity is a fundamental concept in any attempt to explore novel thematic and analytical possibilities in the history of Greek sport. But what exactly is identity? The issue of identity has received renewed attention by social and cognitive scientists in recent years, as well in public discourse – it would not be an exaggeration to claim that we currently live in the age of identity. Sports studies in general have kept pace with these developments.⁴ In part responding to multiculturalism and globalization, sport and identity studies scholars have come to appreciate the fluid and dynamic nature of the concept and practice of identities. Identity formation is largely recognized as a process of self and collective categorization. Moreover, identities are also seen as constructed relationally and as constitutive of several contingent factors. That is why identities are multifaceted and malleable, cognitive and performative. In the words of Kath Woodward, a scholar active in both identity and sport studies, “identity occupies the interface between the personal and the social, the psychic and the social.”⁵

Individuals usually possess numerous co-existing, often intersecting and at times conflicting identities, e.g. gender, ethnic, social class, religious, racial, cultural to name just a few. These can be envisaged as concentric and interconnected rings which are demarcated by visible and non-visual symbols.⁶ In certain contexts, one or more of these identities can be salient. A pivotal issue is the process whereby these identities are conceptually developed and negotiated both by the self and by others. Social and cultural factors play a crucial, although not an exclusive, part in identity construction. A related issue is the practical means through which identities are instantiated in the public sphere. Embodied practices, including sport, are fundamental in this process, as are performances and facets of the materiality of commemoration of sport achievements (e.g. honorary inscriptions, statues). It should also be noted that since contextual factors are critical in forging identities, it can be deduced that as conditions and practices change so do identities. In other words, there is always a wider historical dimension to identity that explains the shifts in the content of individual or collective identities over time.⁷

These insights on the nature of identities have a great potential for enhancing our understanding of the various manifestations of identity in the ancient Greek world. A prudent deployment of comparative interpretative models usually goes hand in hand with the adoption of novel research themes and questions. In recent

years a series of analytically focused and methodologically rigorous scholarly works has renewed interest in issues of identity in the ancient world.⁸ Much of this scholarship has focused initially on perceptions of ethnic identity, although more recently some scholars have turned into a more thorough examination of social status, civic and gender identities. In the field of Greek sport, recent work has laid the foundation for further sustained study on how identities were articulated and negotiated through Greek sport. Such works include Mark Golden's books and articles (especially 1997, 1998, 2008) that examine issues of social class and gender in connection with sport; Tom Scanlon's examination of women's sport, as well as other aspects of athletics, in the Greek world (1999, 2002, 2008); Thomas Nielsen's study (2007) on the role of Olympia in the formation of a city-state culture during the Classical period; Christian Mann's (2002; 2010; 2011) work on the inter-connectivity between Greek and Roman sports and the negotiations of identity that it entailed;⁹ and finally numerous studies that have highlighted the importance of sport in the process of constructing and negotiating a Greek cultural identity among the elites of the Greek-speaking communities of the Roman empire (König 2005; Newby 2005; van Nijf 1999, 2001, 2003a, 2003b, 2010). Other recent works on ancient Greek athletics examine social and cultural aspects of sport that are related to identity construction.¹⁰ All these works are valuable and pioneering in their own way but as they engage only a portion of the extensive swath of evidence related to Greek sport, they also serve to highlight the immense potential of studying in conjunction Greek identities and athletics, broadly defined. It is the aim of this monograph to contribute further to these scholarly debates through a series of case studies that systematically explore facets of the performance and representation of identities through and by sport in the ancient Greek world.

Greek sport enjoyed a long period of popularity from the eighth century BCE to the end of the third century CE. These were centuries of expansion: more events, more games and more athletes were added until Greek sport reached its apogee in what Louis Robert had memorably called the "explosion agonistique" of the Roman Imperial period.¹¹ However, the history of Greek sport was not merely a story of quantitative increase. Even though the basic framework of Greek agonistic life, which largely consisted of the top-tier interstate games, the plethora of local contests, the *ephebeia* and other forms of physical education that centered around the *gymnasia* and *palaistrai*, was easily recognizable by Greeks and non-Greeks alike, behind the surface loomed an astonishing variety of sport-related practices that contributed to the richness and the complexity of Greek sport. Such practices included local variations of athletic rules for contests, malleable conditions for participation in citizen-training programs as well as ever-evolving forms of representation and commemoration of athletic achievements and benefactions. In such a context, the meanings generated by Greek sport were always shifting and adapting to the exigencies and contingencies of the moment. Most importantly for our purposes in the Greek world, as in modern times, sport was a signifier and a constituent of multiple, frequently overlapping, identities. As Mark Golden aptly expressed it, "Greek sport was enveloped in a series of hierarchies in which events,

festivals, genders, nations and other groups were ranged and ranked no less than individuals.”¹²

As a way of illustrating this point, one may think of the use and the meaning attached to olive oil, a basic commodity in the ancient world, in connection with sport. In the Archaic and Classical periods the evidence for a link between olive oil and athletics is almost exclusively visual, i.e. black and red-figure vases that portray athletes anointing themselves with oil and then scraping it off after training or competition. The discovery of strygils, the specialist instruments used for removing the oil and dirt from athletes’ bodies, complements the picture. Not much is known regarding the provision of oil during this early period, hence it is assumed that it was largely provided in *gymnasia* and other facilities by civic authorities. This use of oil was, in other words, rather esoteric and confined to the sub-culture of habitual trainees and professional athletes. Moreover, the provision and management of anointing oil was considered routine business that was largely devoid of a wider range of ideological connotations, hence the relative lack of interest in the extant sources of the late Archaic and Classical period on the subject. However, by the second century CE the use of oil for sport and leisure (e.g. baths) was transformed into an iconic act of Hellenic cultural identity and hence its provision emerged as a highly coveted and prestigious agonistic benefaction. Numerous inscriptions, primarily honorary decrees for gymnasiarchs, *agonothetai* and other benefactors, provide elaborate details on the provision and use of oil. The duration, quality and quantity (and sometimes the price) of anointing oil provided to all interested groups were highlighted and became the object of praise by communities. Hence the often generous terms of disposal of anointing oil, e.g. throughout day and night, for *gymnasion* trainees but often other groups, occasionally including foreign visitors, women and slaves, are frequently enumerated in detail in the same honorary monuments. While some of these benefactions were undertaken on the occasion of prominent local festivals, others were related to the daily supply of agonistic oil in *gymnasia* and other facilities. At times women of affluent backgrounds were also involved, on their own or in conjunction with their husbands, in the acts of dispensing oil to *gymnasion* trainees and other beneficiaries. Inscribed memorials of oil providers were often accompanied by reliefs that pointed visually – e.g. through a portrayal of oil urns and other germane accouterments – to the nature of the benefaction undertaken by the honorees. We can clearly argue therefore that by the Imperial period, as wealthy benefactors had substituted civic treasuries as the main suppliers of agonistic oil, the provision of this sport staple has become a prime locus for the performance and representation of gendered elite and other status identities.

This complex network of meanings and identities concerned merely the *supply* of anointing oil. When we move from supply to consumption, it becomes evident that the prescribed use of oil by gymnasial groups and other recipients articulated a particular social hierarchy that largely reflected the division of a community into distinct status groups divided along gender, legal and age (e.g. full citizens, minors, elderly) lines. Members of subaltern groups (e.g. women, slaves,

non-citizens) were given the opportunity to occasionally, especially during major civic agonistic festivals, partake of anointing oil in *gymnasia* and baths. During these occasions subaltern groups entered into a liminal state that allowed for temporary role-realignment of their social standing – I elaborate this point in Chapter 6.1c.

Moving beyond the supply and use of anointing oil in Greek sport and leisure, a closer look at the extant source material reveals a plethora of other sport-related commodities and practices that essentially operated as ritualistic microcosms of civic life. In Greek communities far and wide sport was thus a live and protean cultural practice, a recipient as well as critical generator of signification. The meanings engendered and propagated through sport were in turn subject to representation, negotiation and conflict. It was this dual quality of sport as signified and signifier of both conflict and accommodation, in conjunction with its almost unrivalled appeal to people from all walks of life, that makes it an ideal entry point to the study of individual and collective identities.

Book contents

Sport is an embodied, socially performed practice. Its materiality and discursive features were the principal cornerstones through which Greeks perceived and negotiated sport, including sport-related identities. The material aspect of Greek sport practices included the physical bodies of athletes, trainers, officials and spectators, the venues (*stadia*, *gymnasia*, *palaistrai*, baths) as well as the various items of athletic equipment or other germane accouterments (e.g. discuses, javelins, boxing gloves, anointing oil). An adequate amount of such material remains related to Greek sport has survived through the centuries. Stand-alone inscriptions or inscribed monuments, most commonly statues with inscribed bases, dedicatory inscriptions of athletic venues as well as informal graffiti scratched on these monuments and other surfaces stood at the intersection of materiality and discourse. Literary sources of all kinds as well as written documents with a more limited target audience (e.g. formal or informal communications written in papyrus) operated primarily on the discursive and ideological level.

For the purposes of our exploration of multiple identities through sport, our access to this material is skewed towards discourse and representation. Representation can be defined as the sum of practices, materiality and ideologies through which a cultural order and a system of classification is communicated, reproduced, explored and negotiated. As Kath Woodward puts it, “it is through representation that meanings change and are reformulated. Representation offers an appropriate vehicle for the interrogation of the relationship between the personal and the social in the construction of identity.”¹³ Representation has a subjunctive component, but what is more widely transmitted is reflexive, and thus conducive to potentially re-shaping shared perceptions about practices or personae. Representation is usually achieved through discursive means and

formulated in monumental/material fashion (e.g. commemorative statuary) or inscribed on the bodies of the protagonists of our stories. In the case of ancient sport, the extant evidence allows for a more in-depth analysis of discursive systems of representation at the expense of corporeality. We will never be able to see in the flesh the famous long-distance runner and *periodonikes* Metrobios from Iasos, active at the end of the first century BCE. But we do have access to fragments of four commemorative monuments with their inscriptions honoring his athletic achievements. Moreover, it can now be ascertained that two of these monuments were originally of Hellenistic date that were appropriated by the civic authorities of Iasos and adjusted, with a new inscription added, to honor Metrobios. To complicate things even further, one of the civic monuments for Metrobios that dated originally to the Hellenistic period, after its dedication to the celebrated athlete became the recipient of informal “victory” graffiti scratched on the statue base by youths that were members of the local *ephebeia*.¹⁴ This one example demonstrates the potential complexity of ideological representations attached to this particular – i.e. statuary commemoration – facet of the material manifestation of sport.

To be sure, even in the case of such relatively well-documented examples, we could never hope to recover the totality of discourses and representations, hence we must satisfy ourselves with a discussion of extant case studies in their appropriate context. This is essentially the main strategy of this book: to illuminate, whenever possible, the discursive, material and corporeal aspects of select episodes/themes in the history of Greek sport and then try to work out how all this contributed to the articulation and negotiation of multiple identities. Drawing largely from my past research on the subject, Chapter 2 brings together a number of themes on sport, victory commemoration and social status in Archaic Greece. The focus of the Homeric epics – the earliest works of Greek literature that contain extensive descriptions of athletic contests – is on the sport practices of the ruling elites. Organizing contests that were through legal or other means (e.g. informal social exclusion mechanisms) closed off to everyone but the highest born was a strategy that was dear to the leaders of Greek communities in early Archaic Greece – the so-called “Homeric society,” to borrow a somewhat controversial but still analytically useful concept.¹⁵ Restricting participation ensured that the glory of athletic victory would be claimed by a member of the ruling elite. The process was in its entirety performative: the elite athletes had to compete among themselves to prove who was physically the strongest, fastest, etc. Such validation of corporeal strength and skill was crucial in asserting their achieved social status and in corroborating the claims, made by the same elites, that they were especially favored by the divine sphere. The somatic performance on the track was complemented by repeated performances of the story of the athletic contests through artistic genres such as literature recitation – the case of the funeral games of Patroklos and the games at Scheria, but also the games for the betrothal of Agariste in Sikyon recorded by Herodotus, come to mind. The effect of these secondary artistic/literary performances was undoubtedly enhanced by the agency of orally transmitted stories, rumors and gossip-mongering about the same events.

All this was taking place in the midst of epoch-changing developments throughout the Greek world. Among the most important was the emergence of the legal concept of the independent and self-determining community, the city-state, which went hand in hand with the articulation of concomitant ideas of basic, and in most cases shared, value-systems, feelings of communal belonging as well as strategies of coping with problems. In the Archaic period this *communitas*, i.e. the material, legal and affective totality of citizens, territories, ideologies and policies, was in most cases politically controlled by the oligarchic elites. However, in some cases the literary and archaeological record trends towards a middling discourse – in a few cases even towards open calls to egalitarianism. Such cataclysmic developments could not have left sport unaffected. Thus starting in the sixth century BCE, at least in some parts of the Greek world youths from prosperous but not extremely affluent backgrounds had the opportunity to play sports.¹⁶ Correlatively, during the same time the number of athletic contests in the Greek world proliferated.¹⁷ These trends continued in later centuries. The numbers of festivals with athletic games reached new highs with the expansion, during the Hellenistic period, of the Greek world in the eastern Mediterranean and then with the continuously increasing establishment of new local games in most corners of the Greek-speaking world under Roman rule. As a result, a greater number of Greeks, by origin or claim, of diverse social backgrounds could practice sport. We even know of cases of talented but apparently not well-off young athletes who were sponsored by wealthy officials and civic authorities.

Two other major sport-related developments of the sixth and fifth centuries BCE germane to the discussion in Chapter 2 are the emergence of the *gymnasion* as the main venue of athletic training as well as the crystallization of a template of civic identity through athletics. In the case of the late Archaic *gymnasion* little is known. It is likely that it originally functioned as a rallying point for elite youths who found in the *gymnasion* a safe space for the practice of exclusive athletic training and competition.¹⁸ The reason why elites would need such a special venue for what in early Archaic Greece, at least in the way portrayed in the Homeric epics, was practiced and propagandized as a class-restricted embodied practice was the consolidation, by the end of the sixth century BCE, of civic athletics. By that I mean both the increasingly frequent involvement of civic authorities of Greek communities in the regulation and organization of agonistic festivals (and eventually, the operation of *gymnasia*) as well as the partial ideological appropriation by communities of the semiotic horizon of elite sport. As examples of the latter one can refer to the growing instances of athletes of the fifth century BCE (e.g. Ergoteles, Sotades) who switched civic allegiance away from their native cities and bestowed victory credit, for their high-profile sporting achievements in the Olympic and the other major games, to their adopted communities. I therefore perceive two main trends of practicing athletics crystallizing during the Archaic period, at least as far as the wealthy and well-connected athletes were concerned: the elitist or “Homeric” model of sport as an exclusive and strictly regulated upper-class practice and the

“Civic” model that comprised both the attempts by civic authorities to intervene and standardize athletic practices as well as some elites who incorporated modes of the middling/egalitarian political discourse in their representations of athletic practices and victories.

As it is always the case, we are better informed about the practices and viewpoints of the wealthy and well-connected regarding all these developments. In the remainder of Chapter II I return to two instances of this dialectic between civic and elite athletics, namely the betrothal games for Agariste, the daughter of Kleisthenes of Sikyon, and the victory of Kimon the Elder in the Olympic *tethrippon* in 532 BCE, a victory that was ultimately claimed by the tyrant of Athens Peisistratus. Both episodes illuminate elite exclusionary practices in an era where collectivism and the processes towards egalitarianism were gaining ground in sport and politics. Moreover, both sets of events illuminate parts of the complexity of representation of elite ideologies and claims of distinction through sport via the media of literature and statuary commemoration. In the case of the betrothal contests for Agariste, the convener Kleisthenes and the gilded youths from a number of Greek cities who competed as suitors, staked a claim at an aristocratic and rarified cultural *koine* through the performance of a year-long set of athletic and cultural trials. The athletic contests and other events, as summarized by Herodotus, had strong Homeric undertones, including the strict admission of scions of noble families as well as the conspicuous waste of time and material resources, the latter presented in literary and oral accounts as Kleisthenes’ munificence.

In the case of the Olympic *tethrippon* victory of 532 BCE the two protagonists, the Athenian Kimon the Elder and the tyrant Peisistratus, were locked into a long-term factional strife. Kimon was an avid horse-breeder who had won the Olympic *tethrippon* in 536 BCE, and claimed another victory in 528 BCE. Even though Kimon’s horses also competed and won in the Olympic games of 532 BCE as well, in the latter instance Kimon allowed Peisistratus to claim the victor’s crown. The two men had come to this arrangement before the Olympic games of 532 BCE, and as a result of his concession Kimon and other members of the Philaid clan were permitted to return to Attica from exile. These two clan patriarchs treated, in other words, the equestrian victory and the prestigious Olympic crown as a commodity that could be traded in order to achieve their individual agendas. Moreover, the episode is revealing of elite attitudes towards equestrian sport during the late Archaic period. Because of the factors summarized above, i.e. increasing popularity of civic athletics and participation of non-elites in sport, it appears that equestrian sport became something of a refuge for sport-minded elites, especially among the families that could not boast physical talent for track and field or combat events. In connection with this point, it is fortuitous that we know something about the way the Philaids commemorated Kimon’s equestrian legacy. The team of horses that had won the three *tethrippon* Olympic crowns were buried next to Kimon’s monumental grave, thus re-asserting the family’s claim to this extraordinary sequence of victories. By placing emphasis on the deep bond between Kimon and the team of horses, the monumental commemoration

highlighted Kimon's exceptional capacities as horse-breeder, thus semantically shifting the focus of his equestrian achievements from inherited, i.e. wealth-based, to achieved, i.e. skill-induced, status.

It is also of note that, as the pressures to comply with the middling ideology that promoted a shift towards communal values and egalitarianism accelerated, whenever possible elite clans during the sixth-century BCE chose to compete both in exclusive aristocratic athletic contests as well as in the steadily expanding circuit of panhellenic and community-sponsored competitive sport. Moreover, both the betrothal contests for Agariste and the Kimon/Peisistratus arrangement over the Olympic victory of 532 BCE highlight the importance of familial networks for articulating and negotiating elite identities through sport in late Archaic and Classical Greece. To further corroborate this point, section 5 of Chapter 2 turns to a discussion of the Alkmaeonids and the Kalliads of Athens, two well-documented families with major athletic and equestrian achievements over several generations. A thorough overview of the sporting feats of these families demonstrates the various strategies, primarily the dual investment of resources in athletic training and horse-breeding as well as the spatial and thematic diversification in the representation of major victories, employed to create metanarratives of victory and status for individuals and their elite clan. It is very likely that less prominent well-off families in Athens adopted the same pattern of pursuing and commemorating sporting victories. There were, to be sure, temporary fashions and regional modalities of constructing these narratives. Bodily representations with strong athletic connotations was such a temporary fashion during the second part of the sixth and the early fifth centuries BCE – section 6 of Chapter 2 looks at the extant evidence regarding statuary and grave reliefs from Athens. It should be noted that the athletically fashioned body was employed not merely to commemorate athletes but the generic representational motif – sometimes called “heroic nudity” – was also used to denote dominant masculinity. In visual terms the image of the naked athletic body was distilled into a distinctive and immediately recognizable persona.

Chapters 3 to 6 shift the focus to a host of other practices that were central to the process of assigning and negotiating meaning, including identities, to and through sport. The underlying fundamental tenet of these chapters is that practices, discourses and other forms of agency that emanate from athletes is only part of the story – one has to also acknowledge the role of structure, resources and other external modalities that could affect the way sport was perceived and employed in and beyond the stadium, *gymnasion* or *palaistra*. The evidence surveyed and analyzed in these chapters also underscores the fundamental quality of sport to generate and disseminate at times countervailing meanings.¹⁹ Chapters 3 and 4 examine various facets of regulation of Greek sport. Chapter 3 begins with a section on spectatorship, a rather unexplored topic in Greek sport. This state of affairs is not surprising – our evidence is overwhelmingly preoccupied with the achievements of individual athletes and

pays little attention to spectators. In this context, spectators and their reactions are usually mentioned incidentally and when they do, the objective of these references is to enhance the magnitude of the feats of athletes. Despite the meager evidence, under certain circumstances modern analytical concepts can be fruitfully employed in an attempt to account for the terms of engagement between athletes and spectators in the Greek world. I argue that the notions of “celebrity” and “parasocial interaction” are two such concepts that are apposite in illuminating attitudes and practices of ancient Greek spectators.

In addition to being a barometer of the popularity and wider social reception of sport, spectators were also part of the equation in the regulatory framework of ancient Greek athletics. Regulatory bodies and frameworks existed in Greek sport since the early Archaic period. As was to be expected, the expansion of the geographical scope of Greek sport, expressed primarily through the continually rising number of agonistic festivals until the third century CE, resulted in more sophisticated, and at time diversified or hybridized, patterns of regulation. In Chapter 3.2 I introduce the general distinction between formal/technical rules and the cultural prescriptions surrounding sport. Both are attested in Greek sport, although it is the latter type, i.e. the cultural prescriptions, that fueled the diversification of regulatory practices attested in connection with Greek sport. However, we should not consider technical rules and cultural prescriptions as entirely separate domains of regulation. In many instances these were rather overlapping and interdependent categories that partially fed off each other in the sense that a formal rule could gradually engender new sport practices and significations, with tangible implications for identity construction.

With this background in mind, I proceed to examine examples of both manifestations of sport regulation. Regarding formal rules Athens as well as the interstate sanctuaries, the latter with their revered bodies of officials and written rules pertaining to athletic events or other matters of conduct, stand out. Most aspects of the Olympic and other major agonistic festivals were meticulously regulated. Especially the Olympic games were an acknowledged focal point for the creation of Hellenicity, and this sense of collective identity was formally endorsed through the existing regulatory framework. In order to elaborate this point select incidents in the history of the Olympic games, most notably the story regarding the participation of Alexander I of Macedonia as well as the Olympic boxing final, as narrated by Polybius, between Aristonikos and Kleitomachos in 212 BCE, are duly examined as prominent instances of rhetorical enunciations of Hellenicity at the sanctuary of Olympia.

When we turn our attention to technical regulations for agonistic festivals, we discover that for the most part such regulations were enacted and written down in a process that mirrored the process of civic lawmaking in city-states. The enforcement of these regulations was entrusted to appointed officials and in some cases cities – Elis, in the case of Olympia. Various aspects of the statutory regulation of the Olympic games that illuminate this process, e.g. the implementation of the *ekecheiria* and one of the most famous instances of its alleged violations, i.e.

the dispute of 420 BCE between Elis and Sparta, are discussed. Furthermore, as an example of a formal change in technical rules that had implications for the social impact of sport I examine the regulation and management of draws, i.e. joint and “sacred” victories, by officials at the local and panhellenic level. The way Greeks dealt with the issue of draws and joint victories was symptomatic of two major trends in Greek sport, prominent especially during the Imperial period. The first was the ever-increasing tendency to create surplus-value through sport – witness the proliferation of qualifying epithets of distinction for athletes during this period. The second was the systematic endeavor to entrench social differentiations by providing civic elites with more opportunities, through the declaration and commemoration of joint victories, to achieve cultural and political capital through sport. The latter development, discussed in Chapter 4, is encountered more frequently in local, low-caliber agonistic festivals which were normally financed and regulated by civic elites, usually in their capacity as *agonothetai*. In these games, the social peers of the organizers had an overwhelming advantage in competing and especially winning vis-à-vis those who had at their disposal less material resources and opportunities for systematic and chronic training. Joint victories were, in other words, a cleverly disguised strategy of social engineering: middle-aged and elderly elites provided the funding for the games and increasingly allowed the declaration of joint victories, especially for contests in the boys age-group, thus allowing the scions of elite families to step into the status role, as well as demonstrate the publicly performative aspects, of the civic elite persona. That was because “to *be* a given kind of person, [...], is not merely to possess the required attributes, but also to sustain the standards of conduct and appearance that one’s social grouping attaches thereto.”²⁰

Another case study of the intersection of rules, institutions and shifting meanings in Greek sport concerns the regulatory framework governing Greek agonistic festivals beyond Olympia at the panhellenic and local levels. This theme is discussed in sections 2 and 4 of Chapter 3. The major games of the *periodos*, a term that became established during the Hellenistic period, exhibited some divergences in their program and regulation, but also promoted the homogenization of technical rules for events. The latter was a prerequisite for the development of a complex circuit of games throughout the eastern Mediterranean.

Regarding the enactment and implementation of sport regulatory practices at the civic level, as sections 3 and 4 of Chapter 4 demonstrate we should be thinking of a process of ad hoc adjustments. Civic contests and other aspects of the local athletic culture – e.g. in connection with the operation of the *gymnasion* – were in most cases a veritable laboratory of regulatory innovations, often catalyzed by local exigencies and concerns. What emerges from the extant, primarily epigraphic, evidence at the local level is normative complexity and laxity, especially in the way benefactors and officials (often the two roles coincided in the same person) implemented non-ritual aspects of agonistic festivals. This framework is the most apposite when attempting

to understand why and how gymnasiarchs and *agonothetai* – many serving for several years jointly with their spouses or other family members – exploited and adjusted the malleable regulatory framework of sporting practices. The cumulative effect of these practices was qualitatively transformative. By the Imperial period agonistic festivals and the *gymnasion* – the latter comprising the *ephebeia* and other training/educational opportunities that the *gymnasion* hosted – became the two pillars of athletic life in Greek cities. Especially the *gymnasion* became central in the articulation of corporate identities: note the age-defined *gymnasion* classes, spanning from early adolescence to senior years.

It is also not surprising to see statutory enactments or other texts of legally binding value (e.g. foundations) related to the upkeep and good functioning of various aspects of sport life, for instance regarding the smooth supply of oil and other necessities for the *gymnasion*, very prominently represented in the epigraphic record. Such legally binding documents emanated from the same class of civic elites and benefactors who oversaw the administration of sport in the Greek world. In many cases these elites were also self-credited with attempts to incorporate members of subaltern groups, most prominently women, slaves and non-citizens, in the life of the *gymnasion* on special civic occasions. Usually these were liminal and ceremonial events, i.e. major civic agonistic festivals that exceptionally engaged a wider segment of the residents of the community. That is a topic expounded in Chapter 6 – in Chapter 4, I address the legal and regulatory facets of this theme. An example of an attempt to engage subaltern groups in sport-related facilities and practices through special provisions in legally binding documents concerns the foundation of Phaenia Aromation in Gytheion. Alternatively, subaltern groups could be involved in athletic life through long-practiced custom, as e.g. in the case of one-time *agonothetai* who strove to incorporate as many members of their local communities as possible into the celebration of an agonistic festival. Custom was usually stronger than formally enacted legal provisions: foundations at times include punitive clauses for negligent civic officials who did not adjust to the wishes of the benefactor concerning the accessibility of non-citizen groups to oil or other perks provided during agonistic festivals or other special occasions. At any event exclusion (sometimes underscored by the rarity of temporary inclusion), as I also underscored in the case of elite “Homeric” sport in Chapter 2, was a component in the process of identity formation in sport and other facets of social life. In the words of Stuart Hall, “throughout their careers, identities can function as points of identification and attachment only *because* of their capacity to exclude, to leave out, to render ‘outside’, abjected.”²¹

Chapter 4 also includes a section (3) on eligibility for participation in local games. The focus is on the better documented Hellenistic and especially Imperial periods, during which hundreds of new games were established. Most of the local games were generously sponsored and were usually named after benefactors. However, strong financial backing and popularity alone could not guarantee their success. Attracting a wide pool of participants was a must.

Given the range and appeal of agonistic festivals in existence, different strategies were adopted. Organizers of games with panhellenic aspirations attempted to attract the best athletes with higher material prizes and convenient placement of their games in the circuit calendar. In some of these games – the Athenian Panathenaia and Theseia are prominent examples – the organizers also introduced events that were open only to citizens of the host city. In the case of the Theseia the events for Athenians effectively mapped out the athletic, and to a certain extent the social, universe of the city and acknowledged every corporate group that asserted part of their collective identity through athletic training and competition. That included tribes, *ephebes* and other youths of various ages as well as trainees in particular venues – all of these groups had their own special niche events. Athletic contests in *gymnasias* were another set of competitions with restricted access, as they were normally open to those regularly training in these venues. These contests were an integral feature of the life of any *gymnasion* and essentially fulfilled the same function regarding age-groups as the limited-participation events in agonistic festivals did for civic groups.

Events, or even entire games, that were open only to citizens were in place in many local festivals as well, sometimes established through the terms of a foundation – see, for instance, the Demostheneia games at Oinoanda. In other instances the existence of games accessible only by citizens can be inferred from the victors' monuments in different cities. In the case of small cities the range of events available to competitors was also limited, with wrestling, *pankration* and *stadion* being the most popular. Age distinctions were normally taken into consideration at the most basic level, i.e. between boys and men – one is reminded, by comparison, of the complex age divisions encountered in some high-caliber local festivals, including the Athenian Theseia. Nevertheless, some of the less glamorous local games attracted extraordinary numbers of competitors for each event. In a contest in Kandyanda we hear of eight rounds of boys' wrestling which translates to 129 to 256 participants while in a local *themis* at Antioch in Pisidia seven rounds were conducted in the same event with a total of 65 to 128 participants.²² By the same token, many of the *themides* in small cities had a more modest or even low number of entrants. This can be reasonably deduced by the fact that many victors in such games do *not* mention the number of rounds they had to compete.

This is not to say, however, that even these low-caliber local games were of reduced importance to the athletes taking part in them as well as to their communities that hosted them. Agonistic festivals continued being a crucial, indeed in many cases the principal, strategy for asserting and substantiating elite and civic status. It is quite clear that due to a constellation of factors, most importantly the occasionally restrictive regulatory framework limiting participation only to citizens as well as the availability of material resources that translated into easier access to systematic training, civic elites had higher chances of victory in local games conducted in their city. In some instances, e.g. the Meleagria *themis* in Balboura, victors openly touted their high social standing as being

from “the leading class” or “from “the most honorable among us” (see Chapter 4.3 for references). A prosopographical analysis of the victors’ monuments at the same *themis* also demonstrates the close family links between several generations of elite victors. We know, for instance, of two brothers who won victories in men’s wrestling, the *pankration* and the *stadion* in two different iterations of the Meleagria, while the son of one was also victorious in the men’s wrestling decades later. The unusual combination of victories in running and combat events points to the limited accessibility of the Meleagria to high-profile athletes from other cities, which over time resulted in the local Balbouran elite dominating the victors’ list of this contest.

Such public performances of athletic skill, exemplified and eternalized through monumental commemoration, should be seen as constituents or pockets of social activity in the universe of self-definition mechanisms. Social positioning, gender roles, civic affiliation and other facets of the self were performed on a series of occasions, often – especially in the case of small-scale cities – to an audience of the same persons. This continuous and multivalent performance of the self is a fundamental aspect of interpersonal relations. Chapter 5 seeks to explore additional aspects of this process as it relates to sporting practices and their representation. Chapter 5.1 deals with literary and epigraphic negotiations of the athletic body. Sport is a quintessentially embodied performance “in which meanings are generated, and whose representation and interpretation are open to negotiation and contest.”²³ Meanings and identities generated through sport are articulated through primary or enfleshed (as in the athlete’s own body) and secondary (as in statues representing realistic or idealized images of athletic bodies) corporeality. Discursive representations of athletic, primarily victorious, bodies came to articulate normative or deviant masculinities, especially in connection with prevailing notions of civic values and service. In Classical Athens, the first of the two case studies comprised in Chapter 5 (section 3), athletic bodies were partially represented in keeping with a wider Greek trend (see e.g. the Pindaric odes, for which see Chapter 5.2) that idealized and glorified athletic achievements at the highest level. The inclination of some intellectuals to be critical, even trenchant, against what they perceived as the excesses of the athletic profession are also encountered in Athens and other parts of Greece since the Archaic period. Especially in Classical Athens a host of literary authors, including playwrights, consistently employed a critical metalanguage towards athletic practices and brought to the foreground of the debate aspects of these practices that they perceived as degenerating and deviant. These included overtraining, overeating, social reclusiveness, lack of civic engagement and limited cognitive skills. Athenian intellectuals, in other words, presented an image of athletic bodily disfigurement, in the literal and metaphorical sense. The targets of these calumnies were clearly the top-tier, active professional athletes: these were the ones that had to dedicate every moment of their day in training, dieting, travelling for competition etc.

Given the extreme popularity of sport in Classical Athens, the extent to which the Athenian public shared these views remains in doubt. One could envisage, however, how even for the average sport enthusiast mainstream practices would appear more appealing than excesses. The image of the excessively trained, overfed and reclusive athlete was aiming at the heart of the Athenian democratic paradigm which was based on the principle of active and constant interest/engagement in civic matters. In the field of sport this ideology of civic praxis was in many ways distilled in the tribal events of major Athenian agonistic festivals, e.g. the *euandria*, pyrrhic dance and torch-race, that required long-term communal commitment, training and co-ordination. Viewed against this model, the image of the somatically and intellectually disfigured athletic body that Athenian literati promoted was in many ways the antithesis of the normative civic body, i.e. the major constituent of the democratic Athenian body politic.

Staying on the athletic body theme, Chapter 5.4a looks at the way athletes themselves, as well as benefactors of athletic culture, represented athletic bodily experience in the Hellenistic and Imperial periods. The mainstream/dominant epigraphic representation of the athletic body during this period is closely intertwined with the process of shaping a successful elite public self. Athletics, in the form of adolescent training in the *gymnasion*, possibly combined with a record of victories in local or panhellenic games, became an informal, i.e. cultural, expectation in the upbringing of any civic-minded individual. By the Hellenistic period (in some cases the origins of this trend can be traced back to the Classical period) engagement with athletic practices was the first crucial stage in the recruitment and recognition of the self in a well-defined role. Even though in the early stages of an elite male's life top-down indoctrination and integration, through athletics and other practices, to an extant social system was prevalent, I argue that in the ancient Greek world as a person matured the process of identity construction became more dynamic and dialectical, as individuals were often presented with opportunities to exercise their agency and nuance the various social and cultural (see gender and legal status) personae that were expected to embody.

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that athletic practices were avidly pursued especially by civic elites (and to a lesser extent by other groups), or that the cultural approximation between athletic and civic life fundamentally affected the way civic elites represented themselves and performed their expected roles. The athletic/civic body of an individual was envisaged as coherent, dominantly masculine, and fashioned in stages that corresponded to a person's age-group appropriate activities, i.e. athletic training and competition in one's youth, followed by tenure of numerous offices and performance of other civic functions, combined with some athletic exercise, in one's mature years.

In some cases the epigraphic record allows a glimpse into the dynamic process of constructing such a life-long narrative of the individual, acted out in deeds and words, as well as of the role that athletic practices and discourse played in assuming a new public persona at different stages of a person's life. Such narrativization of identity, which was essentially a process of "configuring of personal

events into a historical unity,”²⁴ is more clearly discerned in honorary inscriptions and monuments that explicitly portray athletic achievements as a springboard to a career of civic service, or in cases where the symbolism (language, emblems, regulatory framework) of sport are used for the purposes of nuancing and transgressing identities. In all these cases life-narratives represented the life of the honoree as a creation of a master oeuvre through a gradual performative transformation and re-instantiation of the self.

As part of this process character traits and practices that were greatly valued in athletics, e.g. physical strength and exertion, came to be perceived as integral in politics, diplomacy, benefaction and day-to-day interpersonal interaction. They were therefore central constituents in the configuration of life-narratives and their discursive and somatic representations. The concept of *philoponia* – “love of exertion” – exemplifies the way this semantic transference from sport to public life operated. Toilsome training was a cornerstone of both professional athletic training as well as training with intellectual overtones in the *gymnasion/ephebeia*. As Pindar and later epigraphic records portray it, for the professionals *ponos* was a *sine qua non* of athletic success at the highest level – there were no shortcuts. Some Second Sophistic authors, e.g. Lucian, employ the same theme and present athletic bodily exertion as exemplary in fashioning efficient and responsible citizens, i.e. in a manner that is antithetical to the view espoused by literati in Classical Athens. At the same time athletes also represented physical endurance, exertion and athletic achievement as direct correlatives to somatic comeliness and apposite conduct.

Benefactors of *gymnasia* and officials, i.e. gymnasiarchs, also boasted their attempts to instill a spirit of *philoponia* to their charges. Through their *philoponia* the *gymnasion* trainees could then pursue their training with commitment and eventually acquire or manifest, in the case of perceived hereditary traits that needed to be cultivated, other character attributes. The honorary decree for the gymnasiarch Diodoros from Ephesos, for instance, singles out as objectives of rigorous *gymnasion* training the achievement of orderly conduct (εὐκοσμία), manliness (εὐανδρία), dignity (σεμνότης) and honor (δόξα).²⁵ *Philoponia* eventually became an event in *gymnasion* contests, along with the cognate *euexia* (“good conditioning,” “vigor”) and *eutaxia* (“good order,” “discipline”) events. Moreover, and in addition to being synonymous of vigorous athletic training, *ponos/philoponia* also became a routine expectation of public service. Thus gymnasiarchs who, as already pointed out, strove to instill *philoponia* and other character attributes to their charges were themselves praised for the *philoponia* with which they pursued the task. The same high standard applied to all public office holders. Public office was, like athletics, a publicly enacted embodied performance. The catch phrase for expressing the absolute commitment and dedication of the civic elite member to his/her public servant role was “body and soul.”

One can detect, therefore, a clear ideological link between mainstream significations of athletic training and the athletic body with self-effacing notions on the physical body that thoroughly permeated civic ideology, especially in connection with elite office-holders. The ability to endure physical toil, and to seek to do so for the betterment of the city, was conceived as a transferable

attribute. This attribute was nourished and inculcated on elite youths through the athletic *ponoi* of the *gymnasion*, i.e. the educational institution *par excellence* where such attributes became embodied, only to be manifested again in later stages of their lives in the context of office-holding, benefaction or other public service.

The epigraphic record also suggests that *gymnasion* training and sport victories gave elites a platform of legitimization in the contest for achieved status. In this vein, even victories in local-caliber *themides* could be a source of pride and evidence of a public-spirited individual in par with holding major religious and civic offices as well as leadership in benefactions, military campaigns, diplomatic missions etc. (Chapter 5.4b and 4c). For elite public figures athletic victories were ideally achieved at the young age-categories (*paides*, *ageneioi*). A common idiom of epigraphic representation portrays these same individuals as giving up active athletics upon reaching early adulthood and turning their undivided attention and energies to public service instead.²⁶ The appeal of athletic achievement in consolidating one's public persona was so strong that some athletes went to great lengths to celebrate mere participation and skilled performance, even at low-appeal games or at games with restricted admission.²⁷ Others deliberately misled civic audiences by being evasive in celebrating victories in local Olympic, Pythian etc. games in Asia Minor by not specifying in their victory monuments the parochial nature of these victories. Hence they left open the possibility that some or all of these victories were achieved in the venerated, old panhellenic contests of mainland Greece bearing the same names. Also worth noting is the trend to graft tropes of the athletic honorific discourse in the commemoration of civic services, e.g. "undefeated ambassador" (ἄλειπτον πρεσβευτήν).²⁸

Similar to the Archaic and Classical periods, athletes and office holders in the Greek cities of the Imperial period presented their careers and achievements as integral and innate parts of a distinguished family tradition (Chapter 5.4d). Such claims were articulated in monumental fashion in victory memorials, and were substantiated by other victory monuments and victor list records. Thus it is not uncommon to discover in medium and small scale cities – e.g. Oinoanda – the remains of victory monuments for members of different generations of the same family. The regulatory framework and other conditions governing the conduct of athletic life and games in these cities, as discussed in Chapter 4, were certainly conducive to the emergence and development of local athletic dynasties. In this context the athletic achievements of one generation of a family were presented as enhancing, through an assumed hereditary chain of skills and values, the capabilities and achievements of another. Close personal bonds beyond kinship could also operate in a similar manner, as for instance in the case of the renowned athlete, victor of four Olympic crowns and other major prizes, M. Aurelius Epaphrodeitos from Tlos and his boyhood friend, and possibly fellow trainee at the *gymnasion*, M. Claudius Herakleides. Herakleides paid for a monument celebrating the major victories of Epaphrodeitos, drawing attention to his personal association and shared background with the famous athlete.²⁹

Athletic education and achievements in competitive sport were therefore perceived and represented not merely as positive influences in shaping a civically responsible person, but rather as prerequisites for the succession of roles that elites were expected to assume throughout their lives. This perception was so central in elite public personae representations that it affected in a major way how elites represented practices of benefaction and intra-familial relationships, including the potential role of elite women in public life. Regarding benefaction officials, especially gymnasiarchs, who held positions related to athletic training and competition, tended to represent their work in a rational and meliorist narrative that highlighted the benefits that individuals and the civic body received from the athletic training or the games they generously sponsored (Chapter 5.4e). During the Hellenistic and Imperial periods this paradigm was particularly potent for the consolidation of elite status, but also equally important for the negotiation of civic identity, especially in an age of limited opportunities for collective political agency. Athletic achievements and euergetism were yardsticks with which to measure the clout exerted by a particular family over several generations, and powerful families reminded their fellow-citizens of that fact through monumental commemoration of victories and other acts strongly imbued with symbolism, including burials in the *gymnasion* or even the stadium – for an impressive example of the latter, one is reminded of the mausoleum of the Saethidae that stood at the end of the stadium track in Messene.³⁰

The issue of athletic practices and representations and their role in negotiating gender and legal status identities, especially for women and other subaltern groups (slaves, non-citizens) are also discussed in Chapter 6. An interesting side note concerns the social background of the participants of the various *gymnasion* activities: a first-century CE list of participants from a *gymnasion* in Thespias reveals the presence of individuals of diverse professional, some banausic, backgrounds as well as the presence of women.³¹ In some cities women are attested or alluded as more or less regular participants in some *gymnasion* activities, although the exact nature of these activities is not always apparent. The same can be said of slaves, although the evidence for them is more limited.

How could these glimpses of alternative, i.e. non-elite or masculine, practices in the *gymnasion* be interpreted? It is important to recognize that in addition to being sites of athletic training and competition, as well as major stages for the creation and embodied performance of normative masculinity and elite status, stadia, *gymnasia* and *palaistrai* could occasionally be transformed into liminal spaces as well as spaces that fostered temporary inclusion and accommodation (Chapter 6.1a). Usually these three attributes, i.e. liminality, inclusivity, accommodation, of athletic venues and events were at a simultaneous interplay. One manifestation of this interplay was the occasional admission of members of subaltern groups, most notably women, non-citizens and at times even slaves, in athletic training and competitive activities. To a large extent, the *gymnasion* was the crucible of these changes. Especially regarding non-citizens the trend became

institutionalized and widespread during the Imperial period in connection with the *ephebeia*: non-citizen youths, frequently resident Romans but also citizens/inhabitants of other communities, joined the ranks of the *ephebeia* of major cities, and competed in the special games for these trainees in *gymnasia*. Moreover, recent research suggests a more socially diverse, than previously thought, composition of the *ephebeia*.³²

To be sure, much of Greek sport was conducted in the context of agonistic festivals. Such festivals were normative and liminal occasions that fostered both community spirit but also the integration of social elements that usually orbited on the periphery of social life. In this vein Chapter 6.1b–c is dedicated, as a case study, to a discussion of agonistic festivals in Stratonikeia in Karia during the Imperial period. In addition to illuminating various cultic and competitive facets of the Stratonikeian festivals, numerous honorary inscriptions for male and female *agonothetai* also dwell on the details of participation by subaltern groups in the festivities. More specifically, during the major civic agonistic festivals distributions of money, food, oil, perfumes and other valuable commodities were made available in *gymnasia* and baths for women, slaves and non-citizens. The exact particulars of these distributions were determined by the benefactors – in some cases benefactors provided additional quantities, than what was normally required, of oil in the *gymnasion*, made that oil accessible for longer periods of time, and then invited groups that were normally excluded from the activities of the *gymnasion* to partake of this extra generosity during festival days. Moreover, subaltern groups were usually invited to dine in special festivals banquets, some of which were held at the *gymnasion*.

All these concessions were of a short-term and exceptional nature but nevertheless created an antistructure, i.e. a situation that allowed for temporary role-realignment and the envisaging of shifts in the dominant individual agency vs structure equation. Thinking of comparable conditions Victor Turner writes, from an anthropological perspective:

The intent of individuals in antistructural liminality is not to produce chaos but to realize a new and more effective integration of the components of experience for which there is no traditional precedent. This may look like chaos to the representatives of traditional order, but may in fact be a creative response to conditions that require societal reordering.³³

While I would not go as far as to claim that in the case of Greek agonistic festivals monetary or commodity handouts and some communal banquets in the *gymnasion* promoted a radicalization of social consciousness and the possibility of social change, by the same token I argue in Chapter 6 that the view that sees agonistic festivals as merely a reflection of civic values and social classifications, or as a one-way street for the social elites to impose their paradigm towards the less fortunate, is inadequate. As the case of the temporary multivocality of athletic venues and practices suggests, agonistic festivals were constituents of a

complex process of meaning-generation that involved manipulation, agency and negotiation in various measures from all the actors involved. Public occasions could therefore easily turn into a platform of expressing disquietude and disaffection with the civic order that local elites promoted through entertainments, festivals and other ceremonials. On such occasions, interaction, negotiation and at time even resistance went hand in hand with relief from daily labor, pleasurable recreation and the expression of civic pride. Leisure practices, in other words, encoded in moments of individual or communal performance, gaiety and celebration the power relations, conflicts and identities innate in Greek communities.

Such limited integration of subaltern groups in agonistic festivals and other aspects of sport life was nuanced by social and economic factors. Women from elite backgrounds, for instance, not only had greater access to athletic training and competition than their working class counterparts but very often they were themselves, in their capacities as *agonothetai*, gymnasiarchs or signatories of foundations, central players in the organization and administration of athletic activities. To be sure, *gymnasia* and *stadia* remained throughout antiquity primarily masculine places. However, looking beyond acts of direct involvement in athletics one would expect that sport, comprising a culturally entrenched and hugely popular set of practices, would have had a wider impact on the constitution and negotiation of *all*, i.e. beyond dominant masculinities, engendered performances and identities. In Chapter 6.2 I start from this working hypothesis and explore the impact of agonistic imagery and discourse, e.g. surplus-value rhetorical clichés or portrayals of wreaths, in the representation of the lives of women who, at face value, did not have any notable involvement with sport either as athletes or through benefactions. In the same section I also engage in a discussion of the representations of acts of athletic benefactions by elite women in connection with widely entrenched stereotypes of female character and public behavior.

During this examination of representation of femininity through images and rhetorical tropes originating in the world of sport, it is revealing to keep in mind and contrast the constructions of masculinity through athletic training and competition discussed throughout the book. Thus female athletic benefactors were often presented – similar to their male counterparts – as embodying fundamental civic attributes and character traits (e.g. love of one's native city), and their service was praised in agonistic terms, e.g. "first among the women" or "first and only" to hold a prestigious office. However, in principle even elite women with public exposure were most prominently identified in honorary monuments with domestic or familial traits, e.g. prudence, love for one's husband and children. In funerary monuments for women, by contrast, the focus is overwhelmingly domestic, with strong references and visual allusions to the emotive and intimate aspects of the deceased's life, e.g. representations of husband and children, depiction of accoutrements (mirrors, spindles) that can be easily identified as feminine instruments of beautification or signifiers of female domestic labor.

Furthermore, in some parts of the Greek-speaking world under Roman rule the wreath was a frequently encountered signifier in women's funerary monuments. The wreath was an iconic symbol of athletic achievement that was adapted for multiple uses in public life and, in this instance, for the representation of the female self. In addition to being tokens of attainment, in Chapter 6.2 I argue that we should read the wreaths and other visual symbols included in funerary stelai as a key to decipher the various personae that the deceased embodied throughout her life. Specifically regarding wreaths, they symbolized achievement both in public life – for the few elite women that had access to it through magistracies – and the domestic realm. Overall, the survey of the pertinent material suggests a dominant model of commemorating, both a public persona and “feminine”/domestic qualities, largely through visual and rhetorical signifiers that originally emerged, and became popularized, in the world of male Greek athletics.

The final section (3) of Chapter 6 shifts to the wider picture of cultural inter-connectivity in the Roman Mediterranean and considers the emergence of a hybrid culture of Greco-Roman athletic performances. Roman-style sports, especially gladiatorial combats and beast hunts, spread fast in the Greek-speaking East but they did not supplant the craze for Greek sport. The Imperial period was, in many respects, a golden age for Greek sport during which hundreds of new games were established and flourished. By focusing on Greek-speaking areas of the Roman empire in this section I explore the reception of Roman sport and its interaction, at the material and discursive level, with the more deeply embedded and popular Greek sport practices. The cultural symbiosis and partial hybridization of Greco-Roman sport can be observed in the language employed to glorify and commemorate gladiators and *venatores*. In the Greek-speaking East these types of performers commemorated themselves by employing the more familiar to their local audiences idiom of Greek athletics. A similar development is also observable in the representation of sponsorship of Roman-style performances. Civic elites often sponsored *munera* and *venationes*, and it was not unusual for the same benefactor to underwrite the expenses of both Greek and Roman-style athletic training and performances. On these occasions, the sponsorship of Roman spectacles was seamlessly integrated into the public persona narrative of the benefactors, alongside his/her sponsorship of Greek *agones* and *gymnasion* activities, as well as the tenure of public offices and other acts of public service. The tone of this commemoration of Roman spectacles was dictated by the dominant discourse encountered in honorary monuments for Greek sport, i.e. emphasizing over-performance (in the case of Roman spectacles e.g. the duration of the gladiatorial spectacles sponsored) and the quality or the singularity of the event (e.g. the use of large numbers of exotic wild animals in *venationes*).

By the first century CE for most civic elites in the Greek-speaking East, in other words, Greek and Roman style sports had similar, if not equal, potential for generating, through frequent and generous benefactions, cultural and social capital. This hybridization of discourse and representation went hand in hand with a hybridization of the material conditions of the performance of Greek and Roman

sports. The trend is more clearly manifested in the conversion of venues that have been associated for centuries with hallmarks of Greek culture into stages for the performance of Roman spectacles. Examples include theaters – the theater of Dionysus in Athens is a well-documented example archaeologically as well as in the literary record. Stadia too, originally built for hosting Greek *agones*, were refurbished to accommodate Roman-style spectacles – e.g. in Perge. In other instances, e.g. Aphrodisias and Nikopolis, stadia were built to be multifunctional, i.e. be able to host without obvious structural modifications both Greek and Roman spectacles. The use of stadia for hosting gladiatorial combats and *venationes* is also abundantly documented in the epigraphic record, especially of deceased gladiators and *venatores* who bragged about their achievements in stadia. In these instances the references to stadia is to be understood literally as the performance stage of Greek athletics that doubled, on occasion or on a more regular basis in some cities, as loci of performance for iconic Roman spectacles.

This analysis of the cultural symbiosis of Greco-Roman sport in the eastern part of the Roman empire concludes the present exploration of facets of identity as well as their construction and negotiation through sport at the individual, civic and interstate level. A short concluding chapter – Chapter 7 – pulls together all the threads of the book and highlights the major ways in which sport acted in Greek antiquity as a signifier of gender, status and group identities, as well as some of the modes and processes of embodiment, materiality and representation through which the same identities were negotiated and adjusted. The concluding chapter also underscores the great scholarly potential of the subject: the field of ancient Greek sport is so rich and intertwines in a multitude of ways with most aspects of constructing the self and modes of societal interrelationships that we have barely, as a scholarly community, scratched the surface.

Notes

- 1 For some examples see Lee 2012.
- 2 Prime examples include Pleket 2001 (revised version of an article originally published in 1974) and 1975; Young 1984.
- 3 For surveys on methodological advances in sport studies see Jarvie and Maguire 1994; Malcolm 2012.
- 4 See e.g. MacClancy 1996; Dyck 2000a; Hargreaves 2000; Dyck and Archetti 2003; Brabazon 2006; Aitchison 2007; Harris and Parker 2009; Wellard 2009; Jarvie 2017; Besnier, Brownell and Carter 2018.
- 5 Woodward 2002, 16.
- 6 For the metaphor and a discussion see Shore 1993.
- 7 See in general Stets and Burke 2000; Côté and Levine 2002; Burke, Owens, Serpe and Thoits 2003.
- 8 Including, but not limited to, Khan 1994; Hall 1997 and 2002; Malkin 1998 and 2001; Wyke 1998; Goldhill 2001; Stephan 2002; Stansbury-O'Donnell 2006; Mitchell 2007; Zacharia 2008; Bell and Hansen 2008; Chaniotis 2009; Derks and Roymans 2009; Foxhall, Gehrke and Luraghi 2010; Whitmarsh 2010; Bommas 2011; Schmitz and Wiater 2011; Cifani and Stoddart 2012; Vlassopoulos 2013; M.M. Lee 2015; Barrow 2018.
- 9 On the same issues see also Carter 2010.

- 10 Chankowski 2010; Christesen 2012a, 2012b; Christesen and Kyle 2014; Coleman and Nelis-Clément 2012; Fisher 1998, 2011; Kyle 2015; Mann 2001; Mann, Remijsen and Scharff 2016; Nicholson 2005 and 2016; Nielsen 2018; Papakonstantinou 2010a; Pritchard 2003, 2010, 2012; Remijsen 2015; Scott 2010.
- 11 Robert 1984, 38. For the growth of the network of agonistic festivals in the Hellenistic and Imperial periods see also Ziegler 1985; Leschhorn 1998; Parker 2004; Vial 2003; Di Nanni Durante 2015. A recent count for Imperial Lykia yielded 160 known festivals and games, see Reitzenstein 2016.
- 12 Golden 1998, 4.
- 13 Woodward 2002, 162.
- 14 Papakonstantinou 2015a.
- 15 See Chapter 2.1.
- 16 See Chapter 2.2.
- 17 For the proliferation of institutionalized games in late Archaic and Classical Greece see Nielsen 2018.
- 18 Mann 1998.
- 19 For an exploration of the same theme in a colonial context see Besnier, Brownell and Carter 2018, Chapter 2.
- 20 Goffman 1959, 75.
- 21 S. Hall 1996, 5, original emphasis.
- 22 TAM II.677, Kandyanda, imperial period; Anderson 1913, no. 23, Antioch, imperial period; see also TAM II.301, Xanthos, second-third centuries CE.
- 23 MacClancy 1996, 4.
- 24 Quotation from Polkinghorne 1988, 150.
- 25 IK *Ephesos* 6, second century BCE.
- 26 There were, to be sure, some athletes of the highest caliber, including *periodonikai*, who had a full athletic career and then, upon retirement from sport, assumed various offices and roles, very often in connection with athletics. See e.g. the second-century CE pankratiast A. Aurelius Menander from Aphrodisias, CIG 2810b and 2811.
- 27 E.g. TAM V.2.1013 and 1015, Thyateira, imperial period.
- 28 TAM V.2.1019, Thyateira, early third century CE.
- 29 Reitzenstein 2014, no. 6.
- 30 For a discussion see Papakonstantinou 2018. For burials of elite family members in *gymnasia* see Chiricat 2005; Fröhlich 2008.
- 31 IG VII.1777.
- 32 Hin 2007; Laes and Strubbe 2014, 104–120.
- 33 Turner 1992, 148. Cf. also Besnier, Brownell and Carter 2018, 161–162 who, referring to sport mega events, go a step further and argue that such events “reaffirm core beliefs that people hold about their social worlds, provide some structure for social change, and provide an embodied context that expresses the ways in which those worlds are changing and how those changes should be understood.”

Status, elite identity and social hierarchy in archaic Greek sport

I Sport and elite status in Homeric Greece: exceptionalism, competition and modes of representation

Odysseus' visit in mythical Scheria is indisputably one of the most memorable episodes in the Homeric epics. The poet presents a quasi-utopian society whose elites are devoid of the worries and tribulations of war and daily labor. Speaking on behalf of his fellow countrymen Alkinoos, the mythical king of the island, admits that:

we are not faultless boxers or wrestlers, but in the foot race we run swiftly, and we are the best seamen; and ever to us is the banquet dear, and the lyre, and the dance, and changes of clothing, and warm baths, and the couch.¹

It is in this context of perennial aristocratic leisure that the poet introduces the first of the two paradigmatic descriptions of sport in the Homeric epics.²

Odysseus had landed in Scheria, we are told, after leaving the island of Kalypso and following a tumultuous trip on a raft. Once on shore, he is discovered by Nausika, the unwedded daughter of Alkinoos, who leads him to the palace. Even though Odysseus' identity remains undisclosed, he is nevertheless acknowledged as a person of import and as a result he receives the sumptuous *xenia* of the king: a feast complete with poetry recitation, gifts and athletic games. The scions of the local nobility, including the sons of king Alkinoos, eagerly join the call for a foot-race, wrestling, long-jump, discus and boxing. The actual description of the contest is very short and the poet turns his attention to an illuminating exchange involving the aristocratic contestants, including the prince of Scheria Laodamas, and Odysseus.³ Laodamas initially invites Odysseus to try the athletic contests. Odysseus declines on the grounds of his recent toils and his current longing for his homeland. Normally physical hardship would be an adequate excuse for non-participation in athletic contests among the elites.⁴ But Euryalos, another noble Phaiakian youth, taunts Odysseus that he does not look like an athlete but more like an itinerant merchant mindful of his cargo. This is perceived by Odysseus as an affront to his status,

and hence he responds decisively: first he accepts Euryalos' challenge and throws the discus, setting a new record for the day's contest. This demonstration of athletic excellence is accompanied by an angry tirade in which Odysseus sets his own challenge to the Phaiakian audience of the games, namely to match his achievements in athletics. The potentially explosive situation is resolved through the mediation of king Alkinoos. This signals the end of athletics as the protagonists of the scene proceed to get entertained by feasting, song, dance and ball play performances.

The second extensive vignette of athletic performances in the Homeric epics occurs in the context of the funeral of Patroklos.⁵ Achilles, the closest companion of the deceased, acts as organizer and umpire of the contests. Volunteers come forward for competition in eight events (chariot-race, boxing, wrestling, foot-race, combat in arms, weight-throw, archery and spear throw). Some compete in more than one event: for instance, Telamonian Ajax tries the wrestling, armor-combat and iron-throw; Diomedes enters the chariot-race and the armor-combat; and Odysseus competes in the wrestling and the foot-race. Of all the events, the chariot-race receives the highest number of entries and the lion's share in the poet's narrative of the contests. The gods intervene and hamper the race of some competitors in order to give an advantage to their favorites. Thus Eumelos, a Thessalian king who is later acknowledged by Achilles as the best in the competition, had to abandon the chariot-race when Athena broke the yoke of his chariot.⁶ The chariot-race ends with a victory of Diomedes and a controversy for the second place, as Menelaos who finished third disputes Antilochos' second placement due to a daring and dangerous overtaking at the turning point.⁷ The two Achaean warriors resolve the dispute on their own but in other ambivalent situations the man in charge – in this case Achilles – is called in to exercise his supreme authority in the games. First he mediates an argument between two spectators, Idomeneus and Oilean Ajax. Then he resolves a contest impasse by declaring a draw in the wrestling. And, finally, he awards the first prize to Agememnon without competition in the spear-throw.

These well-known and profusely discussed episodes bring together a number of emblematic themes in the representation of Greek sport from the early Archaic to its late antique manifestations, namely social status, embodiment, performance, reception, and regulation. In Homer the vantage point is the politically dominant elite. Even though Homer occasionally portrays in the *Iliad* the rank and file of the Achaean army practicing athletics, the focus is clearly on the sport practices of the ruling class.⁸ In the Greek world as portrayed by Homer the ruling elite was the group that indisputably and emphatically wielded economic, social and political power. Indeed it was the overall objective of much of oral epic poetry to celebrate the values and achievements of an aristocracy of warrior rulers. Membership qualifications in this exclusive group shifted over time. In the Homeric epics, for instance, the elites are the landowning gentry who actively engage in a number of hallmark practices, including political and military leadership, but also leisure and other cultural practices such as feasts, sport and

facets of *xenia* (i.e. ritualized friendship), that distinguish them from the remainder of the population.⁹

Similar to other cultural traits of the social elite as portrayed in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, Homeric narratives of sport operate at intersecting levels. The first is the historical “Homeric” society, i.e. the period of Greek history to which many of the institutions, practices and values adumbrated in the Homeric epics can be attributed. This is a controversial subject, but in recent decades strong arguments have been advanced in favor of the Greek communities of the eighth or seventh centuries BCE as the historical background of the Homeric epics.¹⁰ Such a date should be accepted as an approximation in the sense that the Homeric epics primarily reflect societal conditions of the early Archaic period with occasional reference to features from earlier periods.

At any rate, such an assessment of the Homeric epics is not incompatible with the evidence regarding the early development of competitive athletics in Archaic Greece. For instance, funeral games for famous individuals are a major occasion for competitive sport in the Homeric epics.¹¹ This corresponds well with epigraphic and other literary evidence that points to the popularity of funeral games in Archaic Greece, even after periodic athletic contests were established.¹² Furthermore, the Homeric epics do not contain any unequivocal and explicit references to recurring interstate contests.¹³ This does not necessarily mean that such contests did not exist. It is possible that an early, local version of the Olympic games was in place for most of the eighth century BCE. The omission of any explicit reference to such a festival, however, means that an early Olympic athletic contest was not instrumental in the process of elite self-identification as portrayed in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. That was the case despite the fact that the sanctuary of Olympia was the focus of systematic and intensive dedicatory activity by eighth and seventh-century BCE elites.

Hence the Homeric epics portray a stratified society ruled by a social and economic elite that is self-defined by heredity (inherited status) as well as performance in war, commensality, sport, participation in *xenia*/ritualized friendship, consumption of luxurious material culture and other distinguishing practices (achieved status).¹⁴ It was important for the process of self-identification that such practices were submitted to the social gaze, either through immediate performance (war, sport) or literary representations (e.g. performances of poems containing descriptions of elite feats). Moreover, all these status identity markers created a network of expectations. A leader, in other words, was expected to be skilled in war and sport, generous in his *xenia*, etc. If he was not, then doubts about his status would inevitably arise, as in the case of Odysseus whose hesitation to engage in athletics in Scheria was perceived by Euryalos as a signifier of an individual involved in gainful trade, i.e. as not being a member of the leisured elite. It is also worth noting that Homeric elite self-identification was largely autopoetic. This is clearly visible in sport: with the exception of the ambivalent figure of Epeios in *Iliad* 23, in both the funeral games of Patroklos and the games in Scheria the call of the organizer for participation in athletics was overwhelmingly answered by social peers of

the organizer, i.e. members of the ruling aristocracy.¹⁵ In this instance, an unspoken and largely respected social exclusion mechanism was clearly in operation. Such situations are well attested in most historical societies in connection with the practice of sport and other cultural practices, and have been commented extensively by sociologists, psychologists and other specialists on human interaction. In the words of Erving Goffman, “the classic phrase of England’s gentry, ‘Anyone for tennis?’ did not quite mean *anyone*; it is not recorded that a servant has ever been allowed to define himself as *anyone*.”¹⁶ Similarly, in the Homeric epics the lower social orders knew that only members of the ruling class or individuals with special physical skills could participate in the athletic contests of the elite. Once they exhibited their skills in sport, Homeric elites re-affirmed their inclusion in the restricted-membership privileged group, and therefore their position of social and political ascendancy. A complementary feature of this self-identification through practices is the distancing from the practices of oppositional groups – the Homeric elites, for instance, would never condescend to compete in the athletic contests of the lower social orders.¹⁷

In the case of the funeral games of Patroklos the process of self-demarkation is further enhanced by the award of prizes to almost all participants, a practice that is related to the award of material objects as gifts in contexts of elite *xenia*.¹⁸ The material value of these prizes also hinted at elite *xenia* and gift-exchange practices. Many of these prizes were also the sort of items that were among the favorite elite dedications in sanctuaries. It is worth noting, for instance, that the sanctuary of Zeus in Olympia was the recipient of a large number of monumental tripods, objects that also figure as prizes in Homeric athletic contests. This suggests that regardless of whether a proto-Olympic games of regional appeal existed in the eighth century BCE, Peloponnesian elites engaged in conspicuous display of material culture at this site of interstate worship in a manner that was reminiscent of their behavior in the exclusive intra-elite games.¹⁹ Indeed, we should think of Homeric elite sport, commensality and early Archaic dedicatory behavior as an interrelated set of practices aimed at reinforcing perceptions of elite social distinction. The main distinguishing factor between the early Archaic athletic contests of the elites and the early Olympic and other contests conducted in the context of religious festivals, was periodicity. The athletic contests of the Homeric elites were one-off, extempore occasions that were more easily managed, manipulated and subsumed to a particular idiom of representation, with the objective to project an overarching image of physical, moral and social superiority of a small group of aristocrats.

The second stage of operation of Homeric sport concerns the literary performance, through oral recitation by bards, of stories of elite athletic achievements in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. It is a central thesis of the present book that the process of discursive representation of sport practices and especially victories through literature, orally circulated stories, monuments and inscriptions was most crucial in the process of negotiating identities through sport. In ancient Greece that process essentially began with the Homeric epics. These poems, as well as other Archaic

Greek epic poetry that is no longer extant or survives only in small fragments, circulated and grew as an oral tradition before they were written down in the Archaic period. Recitation of feats of physical bravery performed by Homeric heroes was an effective self-legitimizing mechanism for historical ruling elites of the early Archaic period who, in deeds of physical and character emulation of their mythical prototypes, asserted their elevated status. Such literary representations were integral in the elaboration of the inherited vs achieved status distinctions that the leaders of early Archaic communities actively pursued. Both inherited and achieved statuses were embodied and discursively represented, but claims for inherited status were more straightforward in the sense that elite status was bequeathed through kinship within an elite *oikos*. However, in the society depicted in the Homeric epics pedigree was a necessary but not adequate condition for elite status. Achieved status, as noted earlier, was forged through trial. Hence claims to privilege and leadership had to be negotiated and re-affirmed on the battlefield, in the popular assembly, at the dinner table and on the athletic track. These embodied performances/demonstrations of achieved status were in turn reinforced by literary and material representations. Oral recitations of epic elite feats served, in other words, as a secondary performance, on the discursive level, of elite achievements and identity in exclusive aristocratic athletics and other domains of social praxis. Literary performances guaranteed the dissemination of the elite value system and dominant cultural practices to a wider audience. They were therefore crucial in the process of creating cultural meaning for elite sport as well as for contributing to the formation of an emerging, during the early Archaic period, panhellenic elite cultural *koine*.

The Homeric epics also provide the earliest instances of sports victory commemoration. Starting in the late Archaic period commemorations of athletic victories in monuments, complete with inscriptions and statues, as well as epinician poetry were instrumental in constructing the elite victor's public persona. A similar function is performed in the Homeric epics by speeches, delivered by successfully tested and proven athletes, that were embedded in the descriptions of athletic contests in the funeral games of Patroklos and the games in Scheria. In his address to athletic competitors and the audience in Scheria Odysseus is quick to outline, in a self-aggrandizing fashion typical of athletic commemoration throughout antiquity, his past athletic valor and achievements.²⁰ For instance, Odysseus asserts that while on campaign in Troy he was the best archer, except Philoktetes. He also concedes that he could not match the achievements in archery of figures of the past such as Heracles and Eurytos of Oechalia. With the exception of such formidable figures, Odysseus claims that he was the best archer and javelin-thrower among all other living men.

The case of Nestor during the funeral games of Patroklos is also particularly illuminating. The situation is slightly different from Odysseus in Scheria because Nestor, due to advanced age, is justifiably retired from athletics and many other physical activities that signified elite status. Nevertheless, when presented with a prize by Achilles, Nestor does not miss the opportunity to offer to

the audience a retrospective of some of the highlights of his athletic achievements. The king of Pylos recollects the funeral games of Amarynkeus, a local lord in the region of Elis. Besides local competitors, the games also attracted noblemen from Aetolia in western Greece. Nestor declares that he won all the events he entered (boxing, wrestling, foot-race, spear-throwing), except the chariot-race where he finished second. In a manner similar to Odysseus in Scheria, Nestor claims that “then there was no man that proved himself my peer” in sport.²¹ These claims were not empty boasting. As other elites, Nestor, even in an advanced age, needed to substantiate his position of leadership with physical feats. In addition, a sports record is only meaningful if it is compared to something else, i.e. the performances of other athletes. Since, on the occasion of the funeral games of Patroklos Nestor could no longer compete, he was obliged to provide evidence for past athletic achievements comparable to the ones by other nobles. Interestingly, this is a familiar motif to sport historians versed in Greek victory inscriptions of later eras, which enumerate in detail the contests, events and different ways that an athlete had achieved a “first” or other athletic achievements that surpassed all past performances. This pattern begins in the Homeric epics, in the commemorative orations of notable athletes who gloat about their athletic feats, recent or past, and in the social prestige and self-validation that such feats bestowed on them.

Homeric elites are presented in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as leading their lives by a strict code of physical excellence and aristocratic values. Athletic performances, especially contests that were accessible exclusively by members of the elite, were a publicly performed and increasingly popular means to re-affirm their hegemonic masculinity, elevated social status and positions of political leadership. Achievements on the track were subjected to an additional stage of public scrutiny and admiration through poetic performances and other forms of commemoration. The Homeric model of aristocratic life and leadership, including the centrality of sport as part and parcel of a wider nexus of exclusive practices and ideologies, remained influential for many elites down to the late Archaic era.

2 Sport and elite status in late Archaic Greece: between “Homeric” and “Civic” athletics

The seventh and sixth centuries BCE were indisputably momentous turning points in the history of Greek sport. The documentation is not as detailed as one would wish but the trends and the patterns that emerge are patently clear. The three most impactful developments during this period were: a) the establishment of institutionalized sport, expressed primarily through the organization of periodic contests in interstate sanctuaries and major cities b) the emergence of the *gymnasion* as a training and educational facility and c) the increasing “democratization” of sport, i.e. the opening up of training and competition to a wider social cross-section beyond the affluent aristocracy.²² The latter development was related to the growing trend towards egalitarianism in other facets of civic life, including politics and the administration of justice.²³ As the following discussion makes evident, at

times these features of Archaic Greek sport operated at a dialectical and at times antithetical relationship with each other or other contemporary trends – for instance, the increasing “democratization” co-existed with attempts to restrict the scope of sport participation in exclusively elite games or venues of athletic training.²⁴ Regarding the process of establishing permanent and periodically recurring games, it probably began in the late eighth century BCE (Olympic games) and it was solidly consolidated by the mid-sixth century BCE after the establishment of the Pythian, Isthmian, Nemean and Panathenaic games, to mention the most prominent and enduring of the periodic games. The emergence of the *gymnasion* culture can be chronologically located in the late sixth century BCE.

Faced with such circumstances, seventh and sixth-century Greek elites who understood the value of sport and athletic victory as status performance, were confronted with a dilemma regarding the nature of their engagement with sport in a changing world of athletics and politics. A possible course of action would have been to continue pursuing a strategy of exclusively aristocratic athletics, on the model transmitted by the Homeric epics, as a prominent signifier of social distinction. Another option would have been to attempt to co-opt the emerging status quo by investing in their participation in the newly established periodic games and by sponsoring, through munificence, the civic athletic network. Although elite civic athletic sponsorship will not be firmly established until the Classical period, there is evidence to suggest that during the sixth century BCE socially prominent Greeks straddled these two tendencies as they often adopted a mixed strategy of pursuing high-profile sports victories in periodic panhellenic contests along with the organization and participation in physical and cultural activities that were aimed exclusively at their social peers.

By and large, elites dominated the highest levels of Greek competitive sport, a trend clearly visible since the seventh and sixth centuries BCE.²⁵ Many wealthy families from across the Greek world often invested in sport with the intention of capturing victories at panhellenic games and thus create family genealogies of athletic excellence.²⁶ For the athletically minded elites, especially of the sixth century BCE, periodic athletic contests in panhellenic and local festivals partly fulfilled the need and desire to demonstrate, to their social peers and to their communities at large their physical, and by extension social, preponderance. Quite often athletic success, especially at the highest level, was perceived as directly linked to claims of political power. For elites, in other words, engagement with sport and victory in a major contest were a well-publicized and effective way to erect, negotiate and maintain social boundaries.

A further development that complicated the picture was the increasingly forceful attempts by civic authorities to appropriate, through monetary awards, ceremonies etc., the lion's share of a victor's *kudos*. This development becomes apparent in the late sixth and especially the fifth centuries BCE, i.e. in the wake of the emergence of a well-defined network of interstate periodic games and the spread of their popularity. Such conditions must have created further uncertainties for the athletically oriented elites who invested in their participation

and potential victory in major games. The issue at stake was that while the elites were the ones investing their time and underwriting all the costs of training and travel related to competition and victories in the panhellenic games, the increasingly widespread notion that victories in these games were prestigious and beneficial to the victor's communities generated publicity and cultural capital for the city as well as the victor. To put it simply, elites were burdened with all the costs, but cities enjoyed a share of a victor's prestige. This situation was best exemplified by the victory ceremony at the major games that required from the victor to declare his name and city of origin. It is not an accident that by the Classical period there are many attested instances of switching civic allegiances by top-tier athletes, many prompted by cities eager to register and present to the wider Greek world more victors at the panhellenic games.²⁷ In one case Ergoteles of Knossos left his native city because of political strife and settled in Himera in Sicily. He went on to win two Olympic *dolichos* titles, possibly in 472 and 464 BCE and a number of victories in the other top games of the Greek world, hence earning the title of *periodonikes*.²⁸ In other instances the sources suggest that athletes received monetary rewards in return for their civic affiliation switch and that their actions caused the consternation of the citizens of their native cities. Such athletes included Astylos of Kroton who competed in the later stages of his career for Syracuse, Dikon of Kaulonia who competed as a boy for his native city and as an adult male for Syracuse and, finally, Sotades, a runner from Crete who initially won one Olympic *diaulos* victory for his native city and then one for Ephesos.²⁹

Two additional factors, that operated in parallel to the attempts of civic entities to partially appropriate the social capital of major athletic victories, deserve to be taken into consideration in connection with the articulation of elite identities and claims to higher status through sport. The first is the increasing frequency with which, after the mid-sixth century BCE, cities organized games in civic festivals and sponsored the operation of *gymnasias*. Both of these activities further reinforced the link between civic entities and athletics. The civic *gymnasia* eventually became iconic venues of athletic training, education and socialization. By the Classical period and for the remainder of antiquity *gymnasias* were indispensable constituents in the fabric of a community and usually no expenses were spared, by states and later by private benefactors, to secure their smooth and effective operation. The second interrelated phenomenon was the "democratization" of sport, i.e. its opening up to a wider cross-section of the male citizen group. It has been estimated that by the Classical period the number of regular sport participants increased somewhere between six to ten times. That means that on average somewhere between a third and a half of a community's households were directly and regularly engaged with sport.³⁰ This engagement included competition in formal *agones* but also training of boys in athletics in the city's *gymnasia*. This picture becomes even more complex if we remind ourselves that elites by and large controlled magistracies and other facets of the power apparatus in the mostly oligarchic cities of the late Archaic period: Athens

before the Kleisthenic reforms of 508 BCE is a well-documented although not, in every respect, a typical example. In subsequent sections of this chapter I will have the opportunity to observe additional manifestations of the fissures and variations within the socially and politically dominant group of civic elites and their attitudes towards sport.

The emergence of athletics as a community-oriented activity as well as the gradually increasing participation of male citizens in sport must have made the attempts of the wealthiest elites – e.g. by Kleisthenes of Sikyon during the betrothal of his daughter – to implement exclusive access to some sporting events stand out as incongruous. Most elites responded to this situation by adapting their victory commemorative strategies. Starting in the late Archaic period, victory memorials, financed by the victor or his immediate family, included explicit references to the victor's community and emphasized the benefits that accrued to it by the honoree's athletic achievements. This new discourse of elite sport victory commemoration became mainstream both in epinician poetry as well as in inscribed monuments that were displayed in panhellenic sanctuaries and the victor's city.³¹ The examples of self-validating victory monuments that emphasize individual/familial achievements and wealth at the expense of civic acclaim are more rarely encountered as we reach the end of the sixth century BCE, and were probably perceived by audiences as departures from the main trend towards the partial integration of elite and civic victory commemorative discourses.³²

To sum up, even though elites, because of their control of plentiful financial resources and leisure time for training and travel, continued to have an advantage in top-tier sport, during the late Archaic and Classical periods it became increasingly more difficult for them to assert and represent success in athletics as exclusively intertwined to social status. As I will argue more extensively in section 4, the role of the exclusive sport signifier of elite status was now fulfilled primarily by equestrian competitions, a truly exclusive sport that required ostentatious outlay beyond the reach of most Greeks. Furthermore, for the benefit of the ensuing discussion, we can distinguish at this point two models of performing and commemorating sport by social elites, detectable primarily during the sixth century BCE. Through the first, what we can call the "Civic Athletics" model, that was undoubtedly influenced by the trends towards democratization and the establishment of civic agonistic festivals, elite athletes with victories in major panhellenic and local games represented themselves as exemplary citizens who bestowed, through their athletic achievements, prestige and fame to their communities. This was, in other words, a model espoused by the elites pursuing a "middling" agenda and propagating the incorporation of the ideological implications of elite sport victories into a civic narrative. The second, what we can call the "Homeric" or hegemonic model, emphasized sport as an upper-class domain as well as a transactional order of exclusive elite privilege, exchange and social distinction. This latter model was espoused and performed by members of the upper class that considered and represented sport as an inalienable variable of elite status and as a

vital constituent in molding a panhellenic elite *esprit de corps*. The impact of the “Homeric” model of elite sport performance waned as the sixth century progressed, yet it is still encountered in the sources referring to this period primarily because it accounted for some memorable stories with powerful protagonists.³³

In the remainder of this chapter I will first review the evidence for two instances of elite involvement with competitive sport during the sixth century BCE in keeping with the “Homeric” model: the betrothal contests for Agariste, daughter of the tyrant of Sikyon Kleisthenes (section 3), and the victory of Kimon the Elder in the Olympic *tethrippon* in 532 BCE (section 4), a victory that was ultimately claimed by the tyrant of Athens Peisistratus. Both episodes provide valuable insights on the nature of elite athletic practices and ideology during the sixth century BCE, especially the foundational perception among some Greek noblemen that athletic achievements elicited primarily individual and familial glorification. In sections 5 and 6 I move from the “Homeric” to the “Civic” sports model and proceed to examine in greater detail how athletes of elite social backgrounds partially integrated, primarily through modes of public commemoration in agonistic inscriptions and statuary, the social capital of their athletic achievements to an increasingly popular set of civic values and concerns. Fashioned in this way elite sport victory commemoration placed greater emphasis on the impact of elite victories on the victors’ communities and thus contributed further to the articulation of a civic-oriented elite identity and a shared understanding of community history.

3 Sport and elite *xenia* in Sikyon

Exclusive elite sport was manifested primarily through ad hoc, one-off and at times extempore athletic contests. One-off games, especially funeral games, continued to be held in the Greek world in noteworthy frequency until the Classical period, i.e. long after the core of the circuit of the major periodic games was firmly in place in the sixth century BCE. Moreover, some Greek elites during the seventh and sixth centuries BCE took their cue from Homer and acted out a model of athletic competition and victory commemoration that closely resembled, and was in many respects inspired, by Homeric precedent – what I have called above the “Homeric” model of elite sport. In this way the representation of elite sport in the Homeric epics, and especially in the two best-known episodes (funeral games of Patroklos, games at Scheria) were critical not merely for what they reveal about perceptions of sport in historical Homeric Greece, but equally importantly because, due to the iconic status of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* throughout the Archaic period, they established the dominant narrative of representation of elitist sport down to the end of the sixth century BCE. For the elites that continued to perceive and practice sport as a privileged aristocratic token of distinction the stories of the games in Troy and Scheria, as told by Homer, raised the major questions and articulated the central modes of the sixth-century BCE discourse of sport, including social exclusivity, divine favor and inherited versus achieved status.

The work of Herodotus, an author that incorporated in his *Histories* numerous oral traditions that date back to the Archaic period, contains echoes of the “Homeric” model of elite sport. Herodotus provides a template of elite practices of sport and commensality, both integral constituents of elite masculine hegemonic identities, in the mid-sixth century BCE through the story of the betrothal of Agariste, daughter of the tyrant of Sikyon Kleisthenes.³⁴ As narrated by Herodotus, Kleisthenes emerges as the protagonist of the episode – it is indeed very likely that Herodotus’ narrative about these events derived from a source or oral tradition favorable to the Sikyonian tyrant.

Hailing from a family that held power in Sikyon since roughly the mid-seventh century BCE, Kleisthenes ruled as tyrant c. 600–570 BCE.³⁵ Under his leadership Sikyon participated in the First Sacred War (c. 595–586 BCE), which resulted in the victory of Kleisthenes and his allies (Athens, Thessaly). By the late 580s BCE Kleisthenes was therefore a well-established and prominent leader. As other elites of his time, Kleisthenes invested on many forms of conspicuous consumption at home as well as in panhellenic sanctuaries. In Delphi a number of dedications are attributed to the Sikyonian tyrant, including a *monopteros* and a *tholos*.³⁶ Kleisthenes was also active and successful in chariot-racing. In 582 BCE he won the first *tethrippon* competition of the new Pythian games and according to the Pindaric scholia, at some point he established a Pythian festival in Sikyon from the spoils he received from the Sacred War.³⁷ Kleisthenes reached the pinnacle of his athletic career with his victory in the *tethrippon* in the Olympic games of, in all probability, 576 or 572 BCE.³⁸ At that point Kleisthenes was undoubtedly considered as one of the most influential men in Greece.

According to Herodotus, Kleisthenes initiated the betrothal of his daughter Agariste on the occasion of his Olympic *tethrippon* victory.³⁹ Following his victory, and presumably while still in Olympia, Kleisthenes publicly proclaimed his intention to wed his daughter and invited any Greek who thought of himself as worthy to be his son-in-law to present himself to Sikyon within sixty days.⁴⁰ A total of 13 suitors from different parts of the Greek world “who were proud of themselves and their community” volunteered and made the trip to Sikyon.⁴¹ For an entire year Kleisthenes subjected them to competitions in running and wrestling and presumably other athletic contests.⁴² In Hdt. 6.128.1 it is further specified that Kleisthenes subjected the younger suitors to athletic trials.⁴³

While sport played a central role in the suitors’ trials, according to Herodotus Kleisthenes also monitored carefully their character and overall behavior. Hence during the one-year period the suitors dined communally, but Kleisthenes also consoorted with them in private. In this way Kleisthenes, we are told, tested the suitors’ “manly qualities and temper, upbringing and manners” (ἀνδραγαθίας καὶ τῆς ὀργῆς καὶ παιδευσίος τε καὶ τρόπου). At the end of the one year period Kleisthenes settled on Hippokleides of Athens to become his son-in-law.⁴⁴ However, he kept his choice to himself and determined to make a public announcement at the betrothal feast. The feast is described by Herodotus as a magnificent and lavish affair in which the suitors and the entire community of Sikyon

participated.⁴⁵ Following dinner, as merriment and drinking progressed Hippokleides started dancing indecorously. Kleisthenes found his behavior embarrassing and as a result he changed his mind and betrothed Agariste to another Athenian suitor, the Alkmeonid Megakles.

Why, then, were sport competitions so central in the betrothal of Agariste and the respective narrative of Herodotus? Herodotus' account makes it evident that his source wished to portray the entire episode as a stage in elite interstate *xenia*. The emphasis on *megaloprepeia*, a term that in this instance denotes the extravagant disposal of wealth that contributed to the construction of social distinction and power, indicates that Kleisthenes intended for this story to be perceived as a series of events of epic proportions.⁴⁶ A number of other features of the story, including the elite origins of suitors, the consumption of one hundred oxen at the community betrothal feast as well as the granting of a talent of silver as farewell gift to all suitors point to a level of material opulence and extravagance that few could match.⁴⁷ According to the narrative of Herodotus the enormity of the resources expended by Kleisthenes on the betrothal of his daughter surpassed all standards of ostentatious guest-friendship expenditure encountered in extant Archaic traditions.⁴⁸ The status and desirability, if not for physical reasons at least for reasons of political expediency, of the bride certainly aggrandized the magnitude of the event. These factors suggest that, to the extent that events in Sikyon approximate Herodotus' description, Kleisthenes intended not simply to replicate but to *exceed* elite, including Homeric, blueprints of behavior. In other words, for the betrothal of his daughter the Sikyonian tyrant adopted an amplified version of the "Homeric" model of elite guest-friendship and engaged in a material extravaganza that amounted to a veritable "conspicuous waste" of resources, i.e. an irrational economic practice driven by the pursuit of prestige.⁴⁹ In the decades that followed the actual events, bards and oral traditions friendly to the Sikyonian tyrant and the Alkmeonids aggrandized further the effect of Kleisthenes' *xenia* by enriching and transmitting it far and wide.

The fact that athletic trials were so central in this protracted and collectively performed construction of elite masculinity is indicative of the weight of sport, as cultural capital, for Archaic Greek elites that adopted the "Homeric" model of behavior and representation. The athletic events conducted at Sikyon contrast sharply to the trends towards institutionalization and periodization of Greek sport, evident in the establishment of a circuit of panhellenic games in the sixth century BCE. At Sikyon a wealthy tyrant – as opposed to a sanctuary or community – served as the organizer, host and financial sponsor of the sporting contests that were conducted as part of the betrothal of the organizer's daughter. The organizer personally proclaimed the general terms of the betrothal process and issued an invitation to potentially interested suitors. An unspoken but clearly hinted social exclusion mechanism ensured that only suitors that thought of themselves as social peers of the organizer came forward and entered the contests.⁵⁰ To the extent that they were not directly connected to a periodic religious festival the games at Sikyon were one-off, secular occasions. Finally, they lasted longer than any other known contemporary example of competitive or initiatory athletics.

In short, in a number of ways the games in Sikyon were more reminiscent, and in some cases were deliberately replicating, the “Homeric”/hegemonic model of elite sport rather than mainstream contemporary sixth-century BCE athletic practices. This was exclusive elitist sport *par excellence*, i.e. performed towards the consolidation of interstate ties among elites through marriage, an objective that served the interests of the highest echelons of a narrow group of aristocrats. Furthermore, sport as performed and represented in connection with the Agariste betrothal affair was completely disconnected, in its original form and in its subsequent literary representations, from any contemporary attempts to associate athletic performance and victory with civic ideology. Last but not least, in the narrative of Herodotus the organizer and participants of the Agariste betrothal episode seem oblivious to any need to legitimize their inherited/achieved status or to sugar-coat their blatantly extravagant behavior, a fact that was probably a source of embarrassment for the descendants of some of these suitors, especially the Alkmeonids, in the Classical period. Such an unabashedly, from the perspective of the context of Herodotus’ era, elitist portrayal of sport and commensality seem to suggest that the core of the story, and most likely the original events, date back to a time when the “Homeric” model of elite sport was popular, albeit not unchallenged, among elites. This state of affairs was gradually mitigated or even reversed by the last quarter of the sixth century BCE, as the evidence for chariot-racing, and especially the episode regarding the Olympic *tethrippon* victory of 532 BCE, demonstrates.⁵¹

4 Chariot-racing and elite identity in late Archaic Athens

The story of the athletic trials conducted in Sikyon for the betrothal of Agariste is a prominent, but not the only known, instance of elites attempting to implement a socially exclusive model of athletic practices and victory commemoration. As noted earlier, the increasing popularity and opening up of sport to socially wider cross-sections of male citizens (“democratization”), combined with the institutionalization of sport at the panhellenic and local levels, made increasingly difficult for elites active in the late sixth-century BCE to represent victories in athletic or combat sports as absolute tokens of social distinction. Additional social pressures, especially trends towards political and social egalitarianism in many parts of the Greek world, made some elites reevaluate their behavioral strategies and systems of representation. These efforts to create less strictly hierarchical societies were only partly successful in some cities (e.g. Athens) whereas other Greek communities remained essentially oligarchies with only minimal concessions granted to the non-elites. Regarding sport, in the city of Athens we can consider a law attributed to Solon, elements of which might actually date from the later sixth or even the fifth century BCE, that prescribed awards of 500 and 100 drachmas for Athenian victories at the Olympic and Isthmian games respectively, as an early sign of the conflict between the trend towards exclusionary elitism and the trend towards egalitarianism in sport.⁵² Given that most of the victors in interstate

games at that time hailed from the ranks of the leisured elite, Solon's law was in all likelihood an attempt to mediate, possibly on behalf of the city, on what were clearly perceived as problematic issues regarding the management and representation of sport at the highest level of competition. To go a step further, given the context of inter-elite and inter-class discursive conflict that is attested in Athens for most of the sixth century BCE, it is also likely that a complementary objective of Solon's statute on athletic rewards was to negotiate, legitimize and ultimately appropriate through state-controlled institutions and processes, contemporary perceptions of elite sport as a hegemonic metanarrative. In this respect, this law attributed to Solon should be viewed as part of the wider attempt to shift civic life towards middling practices and discourses.

Irrespective of the relative success or failure in each Greek city of the wider movements towards egalitarianism, from the perspective of athletically oriented elites as the sixth century BCE progressed the overall context was increasingly hostile for any attempt to represent victories in athletic or combat events as achieved exclusively through inherent and divinely endowed traits that singled out an elite individual and his family from the rest of the citizenry. It is indicative of the sweeping transformation of sport perceptions and practices during the sixth century BCE that both Athenian suitors at the betrothal contests in Sikyon hailed from prominent political and athletic families that pursued strategies of athletic competition and victory that accommodated to both of the prominent streaks of elite sport identified above, i.e. as an aristocratic preserve instantiated in episodic competitions such as betrothal contests or funeral games ("Homeric" model) or as part of a communal value system that articulated the interests of the *polis* and represented itself primarily in periodically held games at interstate sanctuaries and major cities ("Civic" model). Hence during the sixth century BCE the Alkmeonids, i.e. Megakles' family, boasted of one Olympic *tethrippon* victory won by Megakles' father, Alkmeon, in 596 BCE and by the mid-540's Megakles' brother Alkmeonides had achieved victories in equestrian and athletic events.⁵³ Hippokleides, on the other hand, was related to the rich and hippotrophic family of Kimon who achieved Olympic *tethrippon* victories in the 530s and early 520s BCE.⁵⁴ Late antique sources associate Hippokleides with the archonship of 566 BCE and the re-organization of the Panathenaia, including the introduction of athletic events in the program of the festival.⁵⁵ For these and other prominent, powerful and wealthy clans a pedigree of athletic success over several generations, presented in the right ideological mantle could strengthen their arguments regarding the inherited nature of qualities and attributes that justified, in their elite worldview, economic and political power.

In this context equestrian sport was ideal for the victory-pursuing elites who wished to position themselves between elite exclusivity and a greater engagement in periodically conducted and open to all athletic and equestrian contests. That was because equestrian sport had a special standing both regarding the value attributed to it by its principal practitioners, i.e. the elites, as well as by the sport-loving audiences of Greek cities. Chariot-racing has always been the sport of choice for the wealthiest of Greeks that could not compete successfully

in athletic events and the link between success in equestrian sport and social standing is clearly echoed in the extant sources. Victories in equestrian sport, however, could not at face value be presented as the outcome of inherited physical qualities of the victor, especially because in the overwhelming majority of cases victors did not personally drive the chariots or ride the horses that won them their panhellenic crowns.

The crucial strategy adopted by the horse-racing elites of late Archaic Greece was to attempt to legitimize equestrian victories as an integral part of the ideological construct that prioritized achieved status through practices, including sport, in order to legitimize elite privilege. Horse-racing elites, in other words, attempted to ideologically equate victories in athletic events which required physical talent, which in turn could be presented as an inherited quality that lifted the victor above the average community member, to victories in equestrian events that primarily depended on the prodigious spending undertaken by the victor.

The story involving Kimon the Elder and the tyrant of Athens Peisistratus over the former's *tethrippon* Olympic victory of 532 BCE is symptomatic of such elite perceptions, practices and representations of horse-racing.⁵⁶ Kimon, born c. 585 BCE, was a member of the Philaid clan, an illustrious Athenian political and hip-potrophic family.⁵⁷ The Philaids were powerful and influential throughout the sixth century BCE and their sports record, especially in chariot-racing, was rivaled in Athens only by the Alkmeonids.

In the sixth book of his *Histories* Herodotus provides an account of Kimon's life and athletic victories.⁵⁸ Kimon was exiled by the tyrant Peisistratus and while in exile he won two Olympic crowns in the *tethrippon* in 536 and 532 BCE. Kimon relinquished the second victory to Peisistratus and allowed him to be proclaimed victor.⁵⁹ A truce (ὑπόσπονδος) between the two men (and, one assumes, between their families and associates) was agreed and Kimon returned to Athens. Following his repatriation Kimon continued to pursue horse-breeding and racing and won another *tethrippon* Olympic crown in 528 BCE using the same team of horses that had won the Olympic *tethrippon* of 536 and 532 BCE. However, sometime after his last victory and the death of Peisistratus, agents of the Athenian tyrants Hippias and Hipparchos ambushed and assassinated Kimon near the city's *prytaneion*.⁶⁰

The prominence of the Philaids (as well as the Alkmeonids) at the time Herodotus composed his account complicates matters. Much of Herodotus' information for prominent Athenian clans must have derived from family histories and other oral and written traditions, including popular and civic narratives.⁶¹ Even more crucially for our purposes, after the establishment of the democracy in 508 BCE and the consolidation of anti-tyrannical sentiments at the center of orthodox Athenian democratic ideology, powerful families with political ambitions must have attempted during the fifth century BCE to purge or at least downplay any possible associations that members of these families might have had with Peisistratus and his sons. In turn, this could have led to a re-elaboration of family histories in an attempt to emphasize stories of resistance to the tyrants at the expense of evidence of co-existence and even collaboration.

This is not to say that Herodotus' account of sixth-century Athens is without value. And at any event Kimon and, at a later stage, the fifth-century BCE Philaids could not have falsified with ease the core of the story regarding Kimon's second Olympic victory. Even before the compilation of the inventory of Olympic victors by Hippias of Elis in the late fifth century BCE there were lists of victors of athletic events publicly displayed at the sanctuary of Zeus in Olympia.⁶² Moreover, even though no monument related to the *tethrippon* victory of 532 BCE survives, there should be little doubt that the victory was commemorated, probably both in Olympia and in Athens. Overall, there is no compelling reason to doubt the fundamentals of Herodotus' narrative on Kimon's second Olympic victory in the *tethrippon*. The arrangement between Kimon and Peisistratus emerges therefore as an extraordinary, though not entirely unique, case of manipulation of an Olympic victory to achieve political ends.⁶³

It is important to emphasize that whatever arrangement Kimon and Peisistratus had, it must have been sealed before the *tethrippon* race of the Olympic games of 532 BCE. Herodotus' language (6.103.2) on this point clearly points to such a sequence of events, i.e. in the Olympic games of 532 BCE Kimon won with the same horses (i.e. as in the Olympics of 536 BCE) and gave over to Peisistratus the right to be proclaimed victor. The proclamation here most likely alludes to the formal victory ceremony at Olympia during which the herald announced the name and city of origin of a victor to the audience. Peisistratus, in other words, in all probability was declared Olympic champion in Olympia in 532 BCE immediately following the *tethrippon* race.⁶⁴ In this way, Peisistratus' victory was formalized and the Athenian tyrant could freely advertise and commemorate his Olympic title without being reproached with falsifying the Olympic records.⁶⁵ The alternative, i.e. that Kimon was declared victor at the Olympics of 532 BCE and that subsequently he came to an agreement with Peisistratus and ceded his victory is not impossible on the basis of Herodotus' text but it is less likely. That is because it would have made Peisistratus' claim to victory appear to be completely at odds with events in Olympia and would have therefore reduced or even reversed the cultural capital and any other advantages that the Athenian tyrant hoped he could accrue out of this affair.

The transaction between Kimon and Peisistratus over the 532 BCE Olympic *tethrippon* victory needs to be assessed in the context of Athenian power struggles during the second half of the sixth century BCE as well as elite perceptions of sport, especially chariot-racing. The meager source-material about Kimon suggest that he eschewed direct intervention in the ongoing political conflicts between powerful Athenian families in the mid sixth-century BCE. This attitude perhaps partly accounts for his nickname *koalemos* ("simpleton") which, according to Plutarch, was attributed to him because of his good-natured character.⁶⁶ He was, nevertheless, a senior member of the Philaid clan. Despite his apparent disengagement from political militancy, Kimon's exile and death suggest that in the eyes of his opponents he was a political threat. Moreover, his standing as a multiple Olympic victor contributed to his public image as perceived by his fellow elites and

Athenians at large, and might have led to his premature demise.⁶⁷ It was not unusual for successful elite athletes from powerful families to seek to convert the popular appeal of prominent victories into personal advantages in the political arena. Athenians were especially mindful of the case of Kylon who, following his Olympic victory in the *diaulos* in c. 640 BCE, attempted to seize power with disastrous consequences for himself, his followers and, to a large extent, the city of Athens.⁶⁸

The perception that horse-breeding elites had of racing horses is also crucial in assessing the Kimon – Peisistratus episode. There is evidence to suggest that hippotrophic elites doted on their best horses and identified with their achievements. In one case Aura, a horse owned by the Korinthian Pheidolas, lost her jockey but still managed to finish first in the horse-race in Olympia, probably in 512 BCE.⁶⁹ Pheidolas went on to honor his horse by dedicating a statue in Olympia.⁷⁰ Possibly in the next two Olympic games, i.e. in 508 and 504 BCE, the sons of Pheidolas entered another horse named Lykos in the horse-race and won, this time in less dramatic fashion, i.e. with the jockey intact. Lykos also won a crown at Isthmia. Once again, the family honored the horse with a monument in Olympia. The monument bore an eloquent epigram, quoted by Pausanias.⁷¹ Lykos is described as crowning (ἐστεφάνωσε) with his victories the houses of Pheidolas' sons, i.e. the horse's owners. As was the case with most memorials of equestrian victories, there is no reference to the jockey or jockeys of Lykos.⁷² In addition, the epigram is silent about the owners' city and it even omits their names, although their father's name is prominently placed at the beginning of the second verse. The emphasis on the distinguished racehorse, the conspicuous reference to the father and the evocative metaphor of crowning the owners' houses are symptomatic of a deliberate attempt to insert Lykos and his achievements in a family narrative of successful *hippotrofia* that harked back to Pheidolas and his horse Aura.

As Nigel Nicholson has convincingly argued, the focus on past familial achievements and the qualities of the horses, at the expense of jockeys and charioteers, in epinician poetry and victory monuments demarcated equestrian sport as an elite practice that transcended the world of monetary transactions and other forms of commodified exchange that jockeys and charioteers, in principle hired employees of the hippotrophic elite, inhabited.⁷³ Victory monuments and epinician poetry usually elided jockeys and charioteers, individuals with fleeting and transactional links with horse-breeders, and instead gave prominence to the racehorses which were represented as being in a lasting and reciprocally beneficial relationship with their owners. While Nicholson is right in his reading of the absence of jockeys and charioteers from victory commemoration, there is an additional and complementary dimension in connection with the representation of horses in elite equestrian victory discourses. Top quality racing horses, like Aura and Lykos or the team of horses owned by Kimon that won three Olympic crowns, legitimized in the eyes of the Greek world, but especially those of the ruling elites, the horse-breeding skills of their owner. In this view many Greek elites had wealth but only few could use that wealth effectively to assemble the best horses as well as the right

breeders and trainers for a victory at the panhellenic games. *Hippotrofia*, in other words, was for Archaic elites a highly conspicuous signifier of wealth and inherited social status. If one's *hippotrofia* resulted in equestrian victories in one of the major contests, then the practice also contributed to the owner's achieved status.

To return to the transaction between Kimon and Peisistratus over the 532 BCE Olympic *tethrippon* victory, the episode is strongly reminiscent of early Archaic gift-exchange between wealthy elites in that the two men treated an Olympic victory and the social capital that derived from it as a cultural commodity that could be exchanged for personal and familial expediency. More specifically, in this instance the Olympic victory functioned as a symbolic token, i.e. a disembedded medium of exchange that could be passed around without much regard to the individuals that handle them. Such symbolic tokens are symptomatic of modernity, but are also to be found in pre-modern, i.e. pre-industrial, societies.⁷⁴ What is particular in the case of the *tethrippon* victory of 532 BCE was that the process of disembedding from its usual context in the world of Greek athletics and its subsequent embedding and contingency in a politically mediated process was a one-off operation, triggered no doubt by the political clout of the protagonists in this episode. Furthermore, what underlies such a transaction was the notion of athletic and equestrian victories as individual achievements and exclusive possessions. Herodotus' narrative implies that the sense of entitlement towards manipulating an Olympic victory that Kimon and Peisistratus displayed was firmly embedded within the "Homeric" model of sport, especially in connection with perceiving, representing and employing major equestrian victories. As leaders of powerful families Kimon and Peisistratus were conscious of community values as well as the inclinations and vacillations of the Athenian public, yet on this occasion they acted in a manner that suggested that all honor and prestige emanating from an athletic achievement flowed back to the victor. It was then at the discretion of the victor to represent, exchange or manipulate his victory in a manner that had only secondary implications for his community.

Kimon and Peisistratus were among the very few Greeks of the time that had the financial wherewithal and social standing to seriously compete for an Olympic *tethrippon* crown. By actually winning it and then transacting it to achieve their personal ends, they further legitimized status distinctions and shored up their claims to social and political clout. For some elites like Kimon and Peisistratus the increasingly popular perception of the late sixth century BCE, a perception that numerous of their fellow elite athletes publicly accommodated in their victory commemorations, which dictated that individual athletic victory was somehow positively reflecting on the victor's city was inherently problematic since it was neither obvious nor axiomatic. For the likes of Kleisthenes of Sikyon, Kimon and Peisistratus what was presented as innate and inherited athletic talent – or the capacity to engage successfully in horse-breeding – were the paramount constituents of sporting success and only those who possessed these qualities and victories could take credit for them and exploit them through multiple avenues of commemoration.

Under normal circumstances Greek social elites inhabited subject positions, i.e. they were recruited into an already existing social hierarchy and assumed roles and identities that they internalized, including those of the athlete, the horse-breeder and the civic leader.⁷⁵ The presentation of these pre-existing subject positions as internalized and naturally inhabited was facilitated by outward performances of rank, including endogamy, rituals of friendship as well as elaborate tokens (e.g. clothing) and practices (e.g. commensality and sport) that conveyed elite hegemonic discourses. Such discursive strategies were especially salient and impactful during the sixth century BCE, an era when elite hegemony was challenged in multiple ways. As a result of these developments, Kimon, Peisistratus and other Greek elites of the sixth century BCE became fully cognizant of the centrality of public performances in sport and other cultural practices as well as their representations in poetry, statuary, and orally transmitted family traditions – the focus of the next section – for the purposes of further consolidating the ideological import of their achievements. In that sense, the afterlife of an athletic victory as a public discourse was as crucial as the victory itself.

5 Family traditions of athletic achievement in Archaic and Classical Athens

For successful Greek athletes, especially from elite social backgrounds, sport was never an individual pursuit: numerous resources and networks of support contributed to victories in athletic and equestrian events. Families were especially active in mobilizing such resources and networks. Starting in the sixth century BCE constructing a discourse of intergenerational athletic achievements was a priority for elite victory commemoration. Even a casual reader of inscriptions in victory monuments or a listener to an epinician ode would have been struck by the frequency and potency of the references to the victor's family and their athletic or equestrian exploits. Especially epinician odes frequently included sections that deviated from eulogizing the victor in order to provide detailed lists of the victories by members of his family, at times stretching back several generations.⁷⁶ In the current section I will provide an overview of the athletic and equestrian victory record of the Alkmeonids and the Kalliads, two of the most successful Athenian families as measured by the number of their victories. I will especially focus on the process of constructing and shaping family narratives of athletic excellence through the dissemination and negotiation of oral traditions. In section 6, I will shift my focus on the interrelated theme of the construction of intergenerational traditions of athletic achievement through monumental commemoration in cities and sanctuaries.⁷⁷

In Archaic and Classical Athens the political clout of the Alkmeonids was matched by their distinguished record in sport. The family engaged for generations in *hippotrophia*, but also invested in the athletic training and competition of their members.⁷⁸ Moreover, enough evidence is available to suggest a carefully crafted strategy of building up a family tradition of athletic excellence that

adapted to political vicissitudes, especially the Peisistratid tyranny of the sixth century BCE and the establishment and consolidation of the Athenian democracy after 508 BCE. Last but not least, the Alkmeonids engaged in a multifaceted commemoration of their athletic achievements through poetry and monuments, in a manner that negotiated with contemporary political conditions but also the dominant trends of perceiving athletic and equestrian victories.

The first Olympic victory of the Alkmeonids is credited to Alkmeon I, son of Megakles I, who won the *tethrippon* in the Olympics of 592 BCE. Herodotus narrates how Alkmeon acquired the financial means to engage in horse-breeding because of his personal connection, and possibly guest friendship, with the Lydian king Kroesus. According to Herodotus' narrative, Alkmeon was invited to visit Kroesus court and was given permission by the Lydian monarch to enter the treasury and carry away as much gold as he could on his person. Alkmeon wore a wide tunic with ample pockets and wide boots and literally stuffed himself with gold. At this sight Kroesus burst out laughing and allowed him to take away all that gold and much more besides. "Thus the family," Herodotus concludes, "grew exceedingly rich. Alkmeon came to keep horses for the *tethrippon* (τεθριπποτροφήσας) and won with them at Olympia."⁷⁹

The story has clear anti-Alkmeonid overtones: a close association with an eastern potentate and a caricatural depiction of the greedy Alkmeon.⁸⁰ Also of note is the association between success in equestrian sport and old/extreme wealth, a common *topos* employed by critics of hippotrophic elites in fifth-century BCE Athens. Nevertheless, even the vituperative elements in the story strongly suggest that elite families, especially those that lacked any notable success in athletic events, had largely succeeded in asserting chariot-racing as an integral element in elite self-validation throughout the sixth and the early fifth centuries BCE. One can go a step further and argue that since Alkmeon was the first Athenian *tethrippon* victor in a panhellenic contest, Herodotus' narrative can be perceived as reflective of a popular Athenian foundation story that elevated, in the mind of most Athenians, chariot-racing as a hallmark elite cultural practice.⁸¹

Alkmeon's victory was the start of a distinguished athletic record for the Alkmeonids during the sixth and early fifth centuries BCE. Megakles II, the son of Alkmeon, was the successful suitor at the athletic and character trials for the betrothal of Agariste, daughter of the tyrant Kleisthenes of Sikyon, in the late 570s BCE.⁸² It is sometimes thought that a fragmentary funerary statue base recording the Olympic victory of a certain —]kles refers to an otherwise unknown Olympic victory of Megakles II.⁸³ Though plausible, on the present state of the evidence there is no secure evidence that Megakles II won a victory in the Olympic or any other major games.

Irrespective of whether he ever achieved any notable athletic victories, Megakles II was a celebrated member of the Alkmeonid family during the sixth century BCE and father of Kleisthenes, the nominal founder of the Athenian democracy. It is inevitable, therefore, that his involvement in the Agariste betrothal trials would have stimulated the interest of the Athenian public. It is

worth considering briefly the afterlife of the story of Agariste's betrothal and the process whereby this episode became crystallized and integrated in a widely disseminated tradition. Besides Herodotus, the story is related by a number of other ancient, mostly late, authors with only slight deviations from the narrative of Herodotus.⁸⁴ The time frame of transmission between the dramatic date (late 570s BCE) of the story and its earliest extant recording by Herodotus is within the limit, i.e. up to two centuries, that, as scholars of oral tradition suggest, we would normally expect stories to be handed down in a relatively reliable manner.⁸⁵ At the same time, the story must have undergone some elaboration during over a century of written and oral transmission. Hence even if we accept, as I believe it is plausible, that a kernel of the Herodotean narrative on Agariste broadly reflected behaviors and ideals, including attitudes towards sport, espoused by prominent Greek elites of the mid-sixth century BCE, by the same token it must be admitted that the story was at some level meaningful and employable as part of a tradition also during the second half of the fifth century BCE in Athens, i.e. at the time Herodotus composed his *Histories*.

The tradition of Agariste's betrothal, as all other traditions, could thus be read and evaluated on different temporal levels. Contemporary protagonists, including the organizer Kleisthenes of Sikyon, had their own agenda and the representation of the story, including the performance of Homeric-style athletics and commensality as hallmark elite practices, was in keeping with it. Putting aside any short-term objectives, one of the long-term aims of Kleisthenes must have been to construct a tradition of interconnectedness with other elite Greek families and thus ingratiate himself into the top echelon of the sixth-century BCE elite cultural *koine*. In the context of the 570s BCE, and for some decades after that, that objective worked both ways, as all families whose scions participated in the Agariste betrothal affair would by default be recognized as belonging in the same top-echelon elite group. The Alkmeonid Megakles, son of Alkmeon, for instance, was the victorious suitor and was represented in the narrative of Herodotus as skillful, sensible, and self-controlled, especially as contrasted to the Philaid Hippokleides. Hence Megakles' successful performance in the athletic and character trials in Sikyon as well as the ultimate outcome of the affair would have integrated relatively smoothly in sixth-century Alkmeonid family traditions. By the time Herodotus composed his *Histories* however, a new layer of signification was attached to the story, especially for the Athenian participants. For fifth-century Athenian audiences Agariste's betrothal clearly placed on the foreground the intimate relations of sixth-century Alkmeonids with tyrants. That was another embarrassing episode of family history that, along with the story of the acquisition of wealth by Alkmeon through the generosity of Kroesus, the Alkmeonids of the Classical period attempted to counteract by presenting a tale of strained relations, rife with conflict, between the family and tyrants, especially the Peisistratids.⁸⁶ To complement the invented tradition of resistance to tyrants the Alkmeonids also systematically cultivated an image of themselves as the archetypal champions and benefactors of the Athenian democracy.⁸⁷

Regarding other athletically prominent Alkmeonids Alkmeonides I, another son of Alkmeon, was skillful in athletic events but also successfully engaged in horse-breeding.⁸⁸ Pindar's *Pythian* 7, an ode that celebrates the Pythian *tethrippon* victory of Megakles IV in 486 BCE, the grandson of Megakles II, provides additional details regarding the sport achievements of Alkmeonids during the sixth and early fifth centuries BCE. By 486 BCE the family boasted of an Olympic crown, two victories at the Pythian and five at the Isthmian games.⁸⁹ Out of this impressive family record at least two victories, those by Alkmeon in the Olympic games of 592 BCE and by Megakles in the Pythian games of 486 BCE, were in the *tethrippon*. The family retained an active interest in horse-breeding and racing at least until the end of the fifth century BCE. Megakles V, son of Megakles IV, won the Olympic *tethrippon* in 436 BCE and Alkibiades was victor at the same event in 416 BCE.⁹⁰

The evidence regarding Megakles IV allows a closer look on conflicting but frequently co-existing models of elite sport noted in previous sections of this chapter. Megakles was ostracized in 487/6 BCE and was thus in exile when he won the Pythian *tethrippon* race of 486 BCE. Nevertheless, Megakles declared himself an Athenian during the crown award ceremony in Delphi. Moreover, Pindar's *Pythian* 7 begins with a reference to the "mighty city of Athens" as the backdrop for the praise of the Alkmeonid clan and their equestrian victories.⁹¹ Megakles and the Alkmeonids emphatically presented in *Pythian* 7 the community and their sporting achievements as reciprocally intertwined: both Athens and the Alkmeonids, the message went, benefitted from their symbiosis and the family's sporting achievements over several generations.

All this was very much in vogue with the community-friendly profile that many elites consciously espoused and promoted. Even though *Pythian* 7 was composed after Megakles was voted into exile, the attempt to please the sport-inclined Athenian *demos* by symbolically conceding a share of their victories to the community must have been a priority for families, including the Alkmeonids, that had invested heavily on athletic and equestrian sport for generations and presented themselves as sympathetic to the middling political discourses. The urge to be in line with the "Civic" athletics model of victory commemoration must have been almost irresistible especially for Athenian elites after the establishment and the consolidation of the democracy. In the case of the Alkmeonids, however, there was clearly a certain degree of dissonance between elite representation, as manifested in *Pythian* 7, and the Athenian public perception of their *hippotrophia* and chariot-racing. Especially regarding Megakles IV *ostraka*, possibly from the ballot that resulted in Megakles' ostracism, refer to his *hippotrophia* as well as other aspects of his lifestyle as reasons for his ostracism.⁹² Similarly, probably in an oblique reference to Megakles' ostracism in 487/6 BCE, Pindar asserts that Alkmeonid equestrian victories generated envy (*phthonos*).⁹³ What the *ostraka* seem to suggest is that the resentment towards Alkmeonid *hippotrofia* was perhaps more widespread among the Athenian public than what Pindar was willing to publicly acknowledge. All in all, even though it would be unwise to generalize on the basis

of few *ostraka*, by the same token it must be admitted that they render illuminating insights on the agency of individual members of the body politic vis-à-vis a set of elaborate, systematic and far-reaching network of elite discourses that promoted equestrian sport as a signifier of social distinction and as an integral part of elite systems of representation.

The Kalliads were another major hippotrophic family of late Archaic and Classical Athens, with an active interest in equestrian sport and major victories spanning the sixth, fifth and possibly the fourth centuries BCE. Written sources and oral traditions for the Kalliads parallel somewhat the material for the Alkmeonids and the Philaids in associating horse-breeding and racing with deep wealth and an affinity to eastern habits. An interpolation in Herodotus gives pride of place to the equestrian achievements of Kallias, son of Phainippos (Kallias I): an equestrian victory at the Pythian games of 566 BCE, followed by a victory in the horserace (*kelēs*) and a runner-up placement in the *tethrippon* of the Olympic games of 564 BCE.⁹⁴ A scholion attributes to Kallias II, son of Kallias I, three Olympic crowns in chariot-racing which, if historical, should be dated to the early fifth century BCE. Later in life Kallias II became notable for his political and diplomatic activities as well as his extreme wealth – he was nicknamed *lakkoploutos* (literally pit-wealthy). A number of apocryphal stories, transmitted no doubt through popular oral traditions and possibly with the backing of political adversaries, attempted to explain the origin of Kallias' wealth. Of special interest is the tradition, reported by Plutarch, according to which Kallias II was present in the battle of Marathon and in its aftermath a Persian revealed to him a great mass of gold buried by his fellow country-men in a pit near the site of the battle.⁹⁵ In reality, the fortune of the Kalliads probably accrued from the exploitation of mining resources.⁹⁶ Kallias III, the grandson of Kallias II, was also a prodigious horse-breeder with a record of victories in the Pythian, Isthmian and Nemean games which he commemorated with a monument in Delphi.⁹⁷

6 Victory commemoration and elite identities in Archaic and Classical Athens

Throughout the sixth and fifth centuries BCE the Alkmeonids, Philaids and Kalliads devised the appropriate strategies and expended resources for the representation and commemoration of their victories. Commemorative genres came and went out of fashion – e.g. epinician poetry – but the importance of representation of victories in a manner that suited the ideological disposition and social/political agenda of the victor remained always current. Athletic victory monuments had pride of place in elite commemoration and, at least since the sixth century BCE, became a dynamic component of elite narratives of social recognition. Often extravagant in form, publicly displayed sport victory memorials were egregious exercises in dispensing and displaying resources in non-utilitarian ways.⁹⁸ Given the close link between wealth and status in Archaic and Classical Greece, communication of athletic success through victory memorials became instrumental not

merely for the conspicuous display of wealth but also for elite identity politics through sport. Especially in Archaic Athens elite sport memorials often overlapped in content and format with funerary modes of remembrance, e.g. funerary monuments that depicted the deceased as athletes. In other words, sport victory memorialization was part of wider elite master narratives of commemoration and self-validation.⁹⁹

Monumental commemoration through statues dedicated in sanctuaries and civic landscapes was a long-lasting and impactful way of celebrating athletic victories that allowed a continuous re-performance and re-negotiation of the social and ideological import of sport achievements. Civic spaces and sanctuaries were complex visual landscapes producing layers of meanings and subjective responses to each encounter between monuments or between monuments and audiences, i.e. a process that can be aptly described, following visual culture studies, as inter-visibility or intertextuality of the visual.¹⁰⁰

In many locations statues and monuments also coalesced to create special sites of memory. The main panhellenic sanctuaries were such sites, but so were cemeteries as well as locations of special historical significance that hosted commemorative monuments, e.g. the battlefield in Marathon with the monumental tomb and its accompanying memorial wall for the fallen warriors of the 490 BCE battle. In Athens and the wider Greek world public and private monuments were “embodiments of memorial consciousness” and their strategic placement in time and locations were indicative of attempts to create meanings through memories and the practices (in our case athletic victories) that such memories evoked.¹⁰¹

Early victory memorials usually took the form of an intrinsically precious object (e.g. tripod) or objects explicitly associated with the practice of sport (e.g. jumping weights, discus). Usually dedicated in sanctuaries, these items were at times inscribed with details regarding the victor, his family and the occasion of victory. In addition to being outspoken victory commemorations, they were also clearly thanksgiving offerings to the gods. The shift to statuary memorials seems to have begun in earnest c. 550 BCE and to have gained momentum in the last quarter of the sixth century BCE.¹⁰² Bronze statues of athletes and horse-drawn chariots offered practically unlimited opportunities for visually spectacular representations of the athlete’s body, wealth and victory. Even though most of these monuments were commissioned and erected in the immediate aftermath of victory, given the impact of memorials it is not surprising that often cities or family members set up statues posthumously. Such “life-achievement” monuments were not uncommon for athletes of the highest level with a substantial record of panhellenic victories.¹⁰³ In some cases such monuments were set up decades or even centuries after the death of a top-tier athlete, often serving multifarious objectives.¹⁰⁴ Groups of statues celebrating the athletic or equestrian achievements of several members of the same family also became fashionable starting in the late sixth century BCE, especially in Olympia and Delphi. A prominent example were the statues of Damaratos (520 and 516 BCE victor in the *hoplitodromos*), Theopompos I (484 BCE victor in the *pentathlon*) and Theopompos II (440 and

436 BCE victor in wrestling) from Heraia representing three generations of Olympic victors belonging to an athletically versatile family.¹⁰⁵

Sport victory monuments were subject to numerous and shifting readings as part of the re-performance, noted earlier, of the event commemorated. In the immediate aftermath of victory the imagery and accompanying inscriptions in victory monuments intimated to the viewer the victor's perspective on the value of victory vis-à-vis his family and his community. Family and community, again as noted earlier, were central concepts in the elite "Homeric" or "Civic" athletics practices current in sixth-century BCE Greece. Victory monuments, in other words, were not mere memorials of athletic achievements but ideological statements with multiple recipients. Beyond their immediate reception, victory monuments were also viewed and admired by generations of audiences, sometimes for centuries after the event they commemorated. Even centuries-old victory monuments, however, were not ideologically innocent. The meanings of old monuments were often re-elaborated and re-invested with pressing, contemporary concerns. Thus the seventh-century BCE Spartan Olympic champion Chionis was honored c. 470 BCE with statues in Olympia and Sparta as he became the object of heroic cult. This belated interest in Chionis was part of an attempt of the Agiads, a Spartan royal family, to appropriate a celebrated athletic champion and hence boost their prestige and power within Spartan society.¹⁰⁶ Attempts to create solid family traditions, real or invented, of athletic excellence were more powerful if they manifested and disseminated themselves in different locales and media. Monumental elaboration and commemoration of such traditions, as the reception of the story of Chionis during the fifth century BCE also suggests, had probably the greatest impact. Late Archaic and early Classical Athens (sixth–fifth centuries BCE) provides a well-documented case study on how monumental commemoration of athletic victories operated within and outside Attica, and how it complemented or conflicted with other genres of victory commemoration in articulating and negotiating elite identities.

The commemoration of Kimon's Olympic *tethrippon* victories, discussed in section 4 of the present chapter, provides a suitable entry point in exploring a range of related issues. By the fifth century BCE Kimon's Olympic victories were fully integrated in Philaid family traditions of athletic excellence. The family could showcase a number of prominent panhellenic victories, including the *tethrippon* Olympic victory of c. 560 BCE, but Kimon's late sixth-century equestrian achievements took pride of place. Herodotus points out that up to Kimon's time only the Spartan Euagoras had equaled the achievement of winning three successive Olympic victories with the same team of horses.¹⁰⁷ This athletic datum probably derived from a fifth-century Philaid discourse of commemoration of Kimon and his victories. Furthermore, Herodotus points out that Kimon's horses were buried opposite their master and Aelian claims that a bronze statue of them was set up in Athens.¹⁰⁸ Horse sacrifices were after all practiced in the Greek world since the Bronze Age and were typically associated with memorials and burials of socially prominent individuals.¹⁰⁹

The apparent symbolism emanating from the sacrifice and burial of Kimon's horses, and its links to power and athletic achievement, could not have been missed by contemporary Athenians.

There was, however, an additional layer of meaning generated by the monumental tomb of Kimon's horses. At face value, the incorporation of the team of horses and their victories in Philaid family traditions, as well as the commemoration of the same horses in statuary contradicted the uncomfortable for the Philaids fact that it was Peisistratus who had claimed the Olympic *tethrippon* crown of 532 BCE. Even though Kimon himself had consented to this arrangement and Peisistratus was formally recorded as the victor, evidence suggests that the ideological conflict between Peisistratids and Philaids over the moral ownership of the 532 BCE *tethrippon* victory raged soon after Kimon's assassination. For the Philaids, any attempt to re-claim the 532 BCE *tethrippon* Olympic crown was predicated on a strong identification between Kimon and his horses. Hence for the Philaids that survived Kimon, the lavish burial and memorial of Kimon's team of horses was a public assertion that it was through Kimon's skillful guidance that these top-quality racing horses were nurtured to the highest levels of achievement.

Any such claim was, of course, a legerdemain because the Philaids, similar to many other elite owners of racing horses, passed in silence the critical contributions of trainers and charioteers. Nevertheless, the conspicuous memorials to the team of horses was a powerful reminder to the Athenian public as to who should really take credit for the splendid Olympic victories of the horses in question. In this way the arrangement between Kimon and Peisistratus in 532 BCE was relegated to the realm of an expedient transaction, dictated by special circumstances. Hence, through public memorials the Philaids ideologically re-appropriated the horses and all their victories and attempted to solidify and expand a family history of equestrian achievement that originated with the Olympic victory of Kimon's half-brother Miltiades in the *tethrippon* sometime in the mid sixth-century BCE. Descendants of Kimon most likely engaged in *hippotrophia*, although no victories in panhellenic contests are attributed to the family during the fifth century BCE or later.

The athletic record of the Alkmeonids is also symptomatic of the centrality of family histories and monumental commemoration of athletic and equestrian victories in the process of negotiating social prominence and power. The earliest extant victory commemoration monument for an Alkmeonid was erected in the Athenian Acropolis. The monument consisted of an over life-size column which supported a bronze votive, probably a bowl or a tripod. An inscription on the abacus of the column commemorated the victories of Alkmeonides I, son of Alkmeon, and another individual, possibly a brother named Kratios, in the *hippios dromos* and the pentathlon respectively. There is no reference to the contest, but the Great Panathenaia is a likely candidate.¹¹⁰ The monument is dated to the mid-sixth century BCE, possibly shortly before 546 BCE when Peisistratus assumed power in Athens for the third time.

Another monument celebrating a victory of the same Alkmeonides, this time in chariot-racing, was dedicated in the sanctuary of Apollo Ptoios in Boeotia. This monument is emblematic of elite victory commemorative trends of the period, as it celebrates key elements of elite identity – successful horse-racing, family, intra-city *xenia* connections – of Alkmeonides. The epinician epigram was inscribed on the capital of a doric column that supported a votive object, possibly a statue. Thus the memorial must have been several meters high, visually impressive and dominant among most other contemporary dedications at the Ptoion. The epigram highlights the name and family pedigree of the victor (“Alkmeonides, son of Alkmeon,” l.2), the equestrian event (*tethrippon*), the games the victory was achieved (Panathenaia), the swiftness (i.e. superior quality) of the horses (l. 3 and l. 5) and finally the contribution of the charioteer (l. 4).¹¹¹ On epigraphical grounds, the memorial dates to the mid-sixth century BCE and it has been argued that, similar to the monument from the Athenian Acropolis, it celebrates a victory of Alkmeonides at the Panathenaia of 546 BCE, but it was dedicated at the Ptoion shortly afterwards when Peisistratus was firmly in power and the Alkmeonids had fled to exile. The assumption behind this argument is that normally a member of a prominent Athenian clan would have celebrated his victory in the top Athenian games with a monument in the Athenian Acropolis, so the dedication in the Ptoion was a contingency plan.¹¹²

Nevertheless, the dates and circumstances of the Alkmeonid exile during Peisistratus’ rule are disputed and it is at any event unnecessary to firmly impose the constraints of exile as the sole cause of Alkmeonides’ victory monument in the Ptoion.¹¹³ It is likely that on this occasion other factors contributed to Alkmeonides’ choice of locale, especially if Alkmeonides was determined to commemorate his victory outside Attica. It might be of significance that Delphi, a sanctuary with which the Alkmeonids enjoyed a special relationship, was out of commission following the destruction of the Apollo temple in 548/7 BCE.¹¹⁴ It is also worth noting that during the same period the Boeotian Ptoion received an unusual amount of dedications of *kouroi* statues, a fact that suggests that the temporary eclipse of Delphi might have elevated the Ptoion as a prominent regional venue for elite commemoration.¹¹⁵ The Athenian tyrant Hipparchos also dedicated a column plus tripod monument in the Apollo Ptoios sanctuary, although there is nothing to suggest that the monument in question commemorated an athletic achievement.¹¹⁶ It is easy therefore to understand why Alkmeonides considered the Ptoion as a suitable stage for his Panathenaic victory memorial, especially given the fact that the charioteer was in all probability a Boeotian aristocrat with whom Alkmeonides was engaged in a *xenia* relationship.¹¹⁷

Kallias son of Didymios, a very successful pankratiast active in the first decades of the fifth century BCE, also pursued a strategy of victory commemoration in different sites. As many athletes of his caliber, Kallias commemorated individual or clusters of notable victories in different stages of his career. Kallias was the Olympic champion in the men’s *pankration* in 472 BCE. Pausanias saw his victory statue in Olympia and pointed out that it was made by the Athenian Mikon.¹¹⁸

The statue base has been discovered and bears a straightforward inscription that contains the victor's name, patronymic and city of origin followed by his event and the name and city of origin of the sculptor.¹¹⁹

Kallias's career was celebrated with a major, perhaps posthumous, monument dedicated in the Athenian Acropolis, most likely in 440s–430s BCE. The honorary inscription recaps the most celebrated victories of Kallias in panhellenic games, i.e. once at the Olympic games, twice at the Pythian games, five times at the Isthmian games, four times at the Nemean games and once at the Great Panathenaia. It is also likely that Kallias dedicated an earlier victory memorial in the Acropolis, perhaps c. 480 BCE, after a victory in 482 BCE at the Great Panathenaia in the boys' *pankration*.¹²⁰

The Athenian Acropolis also hosted numerous other victory memorials of Athenian panhellenic victors. In fact, for Athenian athletes of the late Archaic and early Classical period the main sanctuary in urban Athens was by far the most popular venue for the dedication of victory statues. We are aware of statues of Epicharinos (c. 475 BCE), Hermolykos (480s BCE) and Pronapes (c. 450 BCE).¹²¹ According to late sources, Alkibiades commissioned in the late fifth century BCE paintings that depicted him as victor and dedicated them in a building in the Athenian Acropolis.¹²² The Athenian Acropolis also hosted a victory monument by Phayllos of Kroton, a renowned pentathlete and runner of the late Archaic period. In 480 BCE Phayllos brought his own ship and fought on the Greek side against the Persians, a fact that partly accounts for the fame and respect that he enjoyed in Athens. According to the most accepted reading of the fragmentary inscription in Phayllos' statue base in the Acropolis, he emphasized both his athletic achievements and his contribution in the critical naval battle in Salamis during the Persian wars.¹²³

It is likely that numerous other sixth and fifth-century monuments dedicated in the Athenian Acropolis commemorated athletic or equestrian victories. A recent survey of the extant remains of late Archaic dedications in the Acropolis concludes that equestrian-themed statuary was the most common form of male representation among memorials consecrated in the immediate vicinity of the Parthenon.¹²⁴ Surely, some of these memorials had military connotations. Nevertheless the preponderance of equestrian-themed statuary and the shift, noted earlier, of many elites towards equestrian sport as a prime mode of social distinction, makes it plausible that a number of partly preserved monuments in the Acropolis celebrated otherwise unattested equestrian victories by Athenian elites.¹²⁵

Athenian cemeteries were also a prime location for the commemoration of athletic achievements. That was especially the case for the Kerameikos cemetery, due to its proximity to the urban center of Athens. In general, one can distinguish two types of elite funerary memorials that contained explicit or allusive references to sport. The first was the kind of memorial that aimed at commemorating a specific victory or set of victories achieved by the deceased. The victory or victories in question were thus perceived and represented as the pinnacle of the athletic or equestrian career of the individual in question. The

tumulus containing the victorious horses of Kimon the Elder was a prominent exponent of this type of monument. The second type of monument was one that alluded more broadly to the enthusiasm and engagement of the deceased with athletics. In this instance, we are probably faced with monuments of less talented elite athletes or sport enthusiasts who did not have any notable athletic achievements to boast about. In the case of Archaic and Classical Athens, examples of the latter type of monument are more numerous.

Funeral display comprises a range of practices and materials, including the various stages of mourning and interment, deposition of funerary votives, size and location of the grave and grave markers. Late sixth-century BCE Athenian gravestones for elites usually consisted of a tall, often over-life-size narrow slab, decorated with the figure of the deceased and crowned by a pair of volutes and a palmette. The figures were sculpted in relief and the deceased were frequently represented as athletes or warriors, i.e. in the nude with an addition of a material attribute that signified athletics or warfare. These were rather stylized and abstract representations to the extent that some scholars believe that these memorials represented an idealized aristocratic type.¹²⁶ Underneath the main tableau there could be a secondary panel, and the monument was sometimes accompanied by a brief inscription. Even without the aid of a text on the gravestone itself, onlookers would have been able to identify the deceased by other elements in the grave and/or the positioning of the stele in a family tomb. Viewers could negotiate the meanings evinced by these monuments – including the iconography and other references to athletics and equestrian sport – in conjunction with other signifiers of elite status and athletic distinction visible in the Kerameikos and the Athenian civic landscape.

Pedigree as well as wider discourses of social ascendancy and power were such prominent signifiers. A good case in point is a fragmentary funerary statue base of c. 550–525 BCE from Kerameikos.¹²⁷ (Figure 2.1) The extant part of the epigrammatic inscription highlights the fact that the deceased was an Olympic victor (l. 1), and provides his name or the name of a relative, of which only the end is extant (—kles). Moreover, the epigram underscores the familial connection by mentioning the deceased's mother (l. 2) and requests from readers to mourn for the deceased who had died “before his time” (*ἄλο[πος]*, l. 3). Some scholars have connected this monument to the Alkmeonids, but even if this is not the case the monument certainly belonged to a member of the Athenian elite.¹²⁸ Other representations of deceased Athenians as athletes include fragments of the shaft of a grave stele from Kerameikos, dated to the mid-sixth century BCE, which depicts a young male with a discus.¹²⁹ A similar-looking stele, but with a badly withered surface, of around the same date was discovered in the southern coast of Attica (Lagonissi/Phoinikia) and represents a youth standing in profile and holding up a discus.¹³⁰ Furthermore, a mid-sixth century BCE fragment of a funerary stele from Kerameikos shows a boxer, presented as a bearded man with his left upper arm raised (Figure 2.2). He is sporting a boxing glove, with the straps tied around his wrist.¹³¹ Other funerary stelai contain references to horse-riding and racing and were meant to single out



Figure 2.1 Statue base, part of a funerary monument for unknown Olympic victor. Kerameikos museum, Athens, Inv. I 332. Photo by Zinon Papakonstantinou.

the deceased as a *hippotrophos*.¹³² A number of monuments also make visual references to sport and games, perhaps as elite recreational activities.¹³³

The preceding overview of late-Archaic Athenian monuments celebrating athletic practices and achievements suggests that even though wider developments certainly played a part, domestic factors including legal restrictions imposed on some fields of elite conspicuous consumption by civic authorities or the conditions of factional conflict that dominated the Athenian political landscape during much of the sixth century BCE affected modes of sport competition and victory commemoration by elite Athenians.¹³⁴ Thus Athenian elite athletes of the Archaic and early Classical periods chose to commemorate their athletic achievements primarily within the borders or the vicinity (e.g. Ptoion) of Attica as well as to represent many of their deceased ancestors as athletes in funerary memorials. This was increasingly at odds with the commemorative practices of their social peers in other Greek cities who found the prospect of long-distance, interstate commemoration in panhellenic sanctuaries both appealing and effective in the process of propagandizing their athletic and equestrian achievements. Nevertheless, the Athenian pattern of monumental victory commemoration during the sixth and fifth centuries BCE is particularly instructive because it illustrates the opportunities afforded by monumental dedications that were dotted throughout

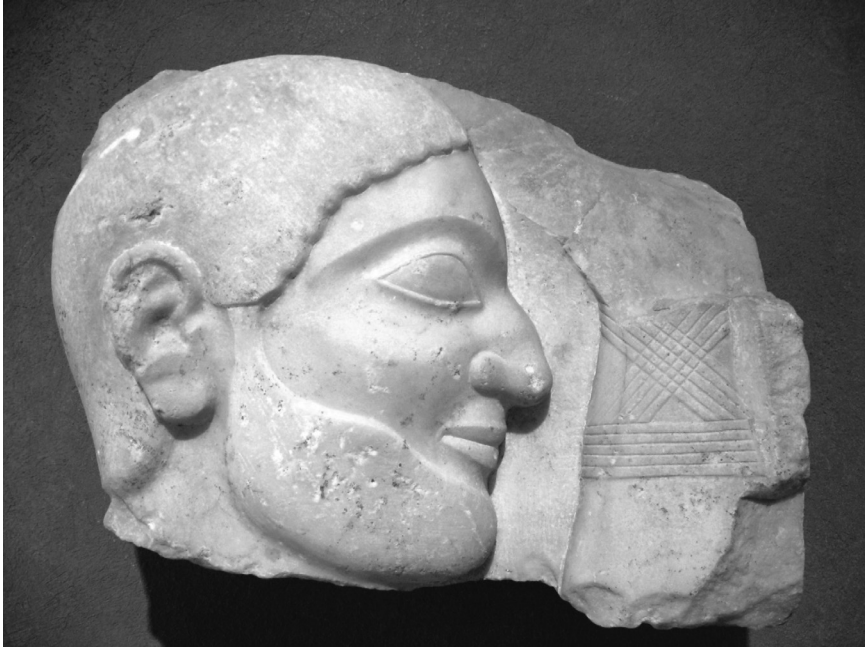


Figure 2.2 Fragment of a funerary stele of an unknown boxer. Kerameikos museum, Athens, Inv. Π 1054. Photo by Zinon Papakonstantinou.

the civic landscape. These dedications were easily accessible to the public gaze and were thus expedient for consolidating elite metanarratives of social ascendancy. The same dedications were also powerful discourses, given the popularity of sport and the desire of elites to outperform each other, in the endemic conditions of intra-elite conflict between Alkmeonids, Kalliads and Peisistratids during the sixth century BCE. Athenian commemorative landscapes, in other words, did not merely concretize meanings but also operated as reflexive agents of cultural capital, identities and values.

7 Conclusion

Since the early Archaic period social elites employed sport as a means of consolidating social distinction and constructing status identities. Early Archaic endeavors to appropriate gymnastic and equestrian sport as an exclusive upper-class domain of practice and representation were challenged by trends towards democratization in politics, social relationships and sport. Elites responded to these challenges either by clinging to a “Homeric” model of exclusive elite sport or by adapting to a “Civic” model of athletics that necessitated a partial shift of their sport and victory commemoration narratives in a manner that acknowledged their communities and the benefits that accrued to them from elite

athletic success. An example of the “Homeric” model were the events surrounding the athletic and character trials for the betrothal of Agariste in Sikyon. In a number of ways the athletic trials at Sikyon were evocative of sport practices as recorded in the Homeric epics, especially when juxtaposed to sixth-century BCE athletic practices (e.g. panhellenic games) that promoted periodicity, rationalization and even a degree of democratization. The participants at the Agariste betrothal trials articulated and promoted a template of athletics as a rarefied elite prerogative and token of distinction that was perceived by some of these elites as an instrument in their attempt to impose a hegemonic discourse over the lower social orders who had less or no opportunities to play sports.

During the last decades of the sixth century BCE, however, when elites found it increasingly more difficult to claim physical skill as an exclusive aristocratic attribute, a number of them turned to expensive equestrian sport as a signifier of elite status. Such a strategy entailed a partial integration of the “Civic” model of sport in elite systems of representation of athletic and equestrian victories. The evidence from late-Archaic Athens, for instance, suggests that a shift of representation to equestrian sport achievements for elite families at times went hand in hand with an acknowledgment of communal values and ideology. Overall, starting in the late sixth-century BCE athletic and hippotrophic elites employed primarily two techniques for the construction of meanings and the dissemination of knowledge of their sport victories. The first was through a network of artfully constructed oral and written traditions of intergenerational family athletic achievements that emphasized inherited ability and status and at times, the mutually beneficial relationship between the athlete/owner of horses and his family with their native city. The second was through the elaboration of sites of memory through the dedication of resplendent victory or funerary monuments, that amounted to ideologically driven scripts, in key sites in the athlete’s city or in select interstate sanctuaries. In the case of the better-documented late Archaic Athens, by dotting the Athenian civic space with sport victory monuments Athenian elites imprinted on the public domain a particular template of athletic success and its meaning for the victor, his family and the community at large. Variations of these practices of victory commemoration continued to be used until late antiquity, and often ideologically conflicted or coalesced with widespread social attitudes towards sport and the attempts by civic and sanctuary authorities to negotiate the ideological import of sport. Spectator behavior and the regulatory framework that governed Greek sport were two manifestations of this process of negotiation, and it is to them that we must now turn.

Notes

- 1 *Od.* 8, 246–249.
- 2 For sport in the Homeric epics see Kyle 2015, 53–69; Papakonstantinou 2011a; Decker 2012, 22–31.
- 3 *Od.* 8, 131–199.
- 4 Kyle 1984a.
- 5 *Il.* 23, 257–897.

- 6 Eumelos, best in the competition, *Il.* 23, 536.
- 7 Gagarin 1983.
- 8 Rank and file occasionally practicing athletics, *Il.* 2, 773–775. References to class tension in the Homeric epics are subtle, see Scanlon 2018.
- 9 While the Homeric elites appear in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as adverse to trade as a source of enrichment (see the jibe of Euryalos to Odysseus in the games in Scheria, *Od.* 8, 159–164) by the late sixth century BCE gainful international trade was acceptable among the Aeginitan elites that competed in panhellenic contests. See Fisher 2015. For issues related to the definition of Greek aristocracy see Duploux 2006; van Wees and Fisher 2015.
- 10 For “Homeric Society” and the “Homeric World” see e.g. Raaflaub 1997; Burgess 2001, Chapter 2; Osborne 2004; Ulf 2009, all with references to earlier literature.
- 11 *Il.* 22, 162–164, a simile; *Il.* 23, 257–897, funeral games for Patroklos; *Il.* 23, 627–645, funeral games for Amarynkeus; *Od.* 24, 85–92, funeral games for Achilles.
- 12 Roller 1981; Nielsen 2018, 15–22.
- 13 Except perhaps in *Il.* 11, 698–702. See Scanlon 2004. If that is the case, then this passage is most likely a later interpolation.
- 14 Recent scholarship on Archaic elites largely acknowledges elite status as fluid and contested, e.g. Duploux 2006 and Wecowski 2014. For elite commensality see in general Murray 1990 and more recently Hobden 2013 and Wecowski 2014, with references to the extensive scholarship on the subject. For the importance of commensality and other practices in the representation of Archaic elites see e.g. Morris 2000; Stein-Hölkeskamp 1992 and 2009.
- 15 For Epeios in the funeral games of Patroklos and in the Homeric tradition see Scanlon 2018, 6–11.
- 16 Goffman 1961, 29.
- 17 E.g. the boxing match between beggars in *Od.* 18, 1–107.
- 18 Papakonstantinou 2002.
- 19 Maas 1978; Morgan 1990; Papakonstantinou 2002.
- 20 *Od.* 8, 201–233.
- 21 *Il.* 23, 632.
- 22 See, in general, Christesen 2007b and 2012a; Mann 1998 and 2001; Fisher 2018.
- 23 For the trend towards political egalitarianism in late Archaic Greece see Robinson 1997.
- 24 It has been suggested, for instance, that *gymnasia* that were established in some Archaic communities during the sixth century BCE partially functioned as an arena where aspects of intra-aristocratic conflict were played out; see Mann 1998.
- 25 Pleket 1975 and 2001. Pleket’s thesis was partially challenged by Young 1984, but most of his views on the low-class origins of many prominent Greek athletes during the Archaic period are today largely discounted. See a summary of the debate, with reference to more recent scholarly contributions, in Kyle 2015, 199–202.
- 26 See Papakonstantinou 2012b; Nobili 2016, 125–137; Nicholson 2018.
- 27 For examples of victors switching allegiances in Greek sport see Papakonstantinou 2013, 103–106.
- 28 Golden 2004, 62; but see Gallavotti 1979, 7–9.
- 29 Astylos: Paus. 6.13.1; Moretti 1957, nos. 178–179, 186–187, 196–198, 219; Young 1984, 141–144. Dikon: Paus. 6.3.11; Diod. Sic. 15.14.1; *Anth. Pal.* 13.15; Moretti 1957, nos. 379, 388, 389. Sotades: Paus. 6.18.6.; Moretti 1957, nos. 390 and 398.
- 30 See Christesen 2012a, 159–160. Regarding participation in sport in Classical Athens see Fisher 1998, 2011; Christesen 2012a, who argue convincingly against the thesis by Pritchard, expounded in Pritchard 2003, 2010, 2012.
- 31 See e.g. Pind. *Pyth.* 7; 10, 1–2 and 69–72. See the emphatic references to the victor’s city in Ebert 1972 no. 5 (end of sixth century BCE); no. 6 (end of sixth century BCE);

- no. 11 (first half of fifth century BCE); and Moretti 1953 no. 14 (c. 460 BCE). See also Ebert 1972, no. 12 (early fifth century BCE), for the image of a victorious athlete crowning his city; Ebert 1972, no. 15 (after 472 BCE), an Olympic victor bestowing *kleos* on his city; Ebert 1972, no. 19 (470s or 460s BCE) an athlete crowning his city (restored). For other examples of the Archaic and Classical periods see Nobili 2016, 139–158. For the victor and his community in epinician poetry see Kurke 1991, 163–194.
- 32 This is the case for certain mid-sixth century Athenian victory commemoration monuments, including those commemorating victories by Alkmeonids. See Papakonstantinou 2014a for a discussion. A number of other late Archaic victory monuments and funerary stelai for athletes also focus on the individual victor and his family while overlooking the city. See, for instance, Moretti 1953, nos. 2 (mid-sixth century BCE), 10 (c. 500–480 BCE) and possibly 9 (c. 500–480 BCE). Funerary stele: IG IV.801, Troizen, sixth century BCE.
- 33 Both of these models also reflected other elite practices and modes of representation, e.g. in commensality or politics. See Papakonstantinou 2012c for commensality, and Morris 2000, 155–191, for the discursive conflict between “middling” and “elitist” ideologies in Archaic Greece.
- 34 The present discussion draws from Papakonstantinou 2010b with additional elaboration, fine-tuning of arguments, and contextualization in the light of scholarship published since 2010. Aspects of the Agariste betrothal episode have been recently discussed also by Hornblower 2014 who focuses on the cities of origins of the suitors and considers possible that Kleisthenes was “deliberately creating an epic atmosphere” (p. 229).
- 35 For various, often conflicting, theories regarding the chronology of Kleisthenes’ reign and the Orthagorid dynasty in general see Leahy 1968; Griffin 1982, 40–59; Parker 1992 and 1994; Lolos 2011, especially 61–65. Even though the rough outline of Kleisthenes’ life is accepted by most scholars, several points of detail remain in doubt.
- 36 For the Sikyonian *monopteros* and *tholos* at Delphi see De la Coste-Messalière 1936, 19–233; Neer 2007, 243–246; Scott 2010, 53–55. It should be noted that some scholars openly challenge the association of the Delphic *monopteros* or the *tholos* with Kleisthenes, e.g. De Libero 1996, 200–201.
- 37 Victory in 582 BCE in Pythian games, Paus. 10.7.6. Pindaric scholia, Σ N. 9. inscr. and 20 Drachmann.
- 38 Hdt. 6.126; Moretti 1957, no. 96.
- 39 The most detailed narrative of the episode is in Hdt. 6.126–130. For later literary traditions of the Agariste betrothal episode see section 5 of the present chapter.
- 40 Hdt. 6.126.2
- 41 Suitors, Hdt. 6.126.3–127.1–4.
- 42 Hdt. 6.126.3: τοῖσι Κλεισθένης καὶ δρόμον καὶ παλαίστῃν ποιησάμενος ἐπ’ αὐτῷ τούτῳ εἶχε.
- 43 On this point see Glass 1988, 161 with the comments by Papakonstantinou 2010b, 73.
- 44 Hdt. 6.128.2.
- 45 Hdt. 6.129–130.
- 46 *megaloprepeia*, Hdt. 6.128.1. See Farenga 1985. For the discourse of *megaloprepeia* in Archaic and Classical Greece see Kurke 1991, Chapter 7.
- 47 Hundred oxen, Hdt. 6.129.1; talent of silver as gift, Hdt. 6.130.2.
- 48 Elite material consumption and spending practices as recorded in the Homeric epics and other Archaic poetry approximate or equal the extravagance of Kleisthenes’ spending. For instance, hecatombs slaughtered and consumed at a feast (e.g. *Il.* 1, 430–471; *Od.* 3, 55–66; 20, 276–283). Moreover, during the funeral games of Patroklos (*Il.* 23, 257–897) most participants receive a prize of symbolic or intrinsic value from the host Achilles. See Papakonstantinou 2002. The uniqueness of

Kleisthenes' conspicuous waste consisted in combining several elements of material extravagance in a single act of *xenia*.

- 49 For the notion of "conspicuous waste," first developed by Veblen 1899, see also Harris 1974, 111–132; Winzeler 2008, 62–75; Gilady 2018, 1–32.
- 50 Hdt. 6.126.2.
- 51 For the integration of the Agariste betrothal story into Alkmeonid family tradition in Classical Athens see section 5 of the present chapter.
- 52 For Solon's law on athletic rewards see also Chapter 3.3.
- 53 Moretti 1953, nos. 4 and 5. See discussion in section 6 of the present chapter.
- 54 Hippokleides, Davies 1971, no. 7617 and no. 8429 II; Kyle 1993, 221, P 97. Kimon I, Davies 1971, no. 8426, see no. 8429 VII; Kyle 1993, 204, A 34.
- 55 Pherecydes *FGH* 3 F 2.
- 56 See also Papakonstantinou 2013.
- 57 Hdt. 6.35.1 where, in reference to Kimon's half-brother Miltiades, the family is characterized as *τεθριπτοτρόφος*, i.e. keepers of horse teams for *tethrippon* contests.
- 58 6.103.1–4.
- 59 6.103.2: ἵπποισι νικῶν παραδίδοι Πεισιστράτῳ ἀνακηρυχθῆναι.
- 60 Hdt. 6.103.3.
- 61 For Athenian elite family traditions in Herodotus and other Classical authors see Thomas 1989; Forsdyke 2001. There is an extensive and ongoing debate on Herodotus' sources and their evidentiary value. See the various studies in Bakker, de Jong and van Wees 2002; Dewald and Marincola 2006.
- 62 Christesen 2007a, 122–146.
- 63 For the political expediency behind the arrangement see Mann 2001, 82–85.
- 64 On this point see also Mann 2001, 83.
- 65 That Peisistratus was keen to cultivate an image of successful engagement with horse-racing is also suggested by the *hippos*-compound names, a common occurrence among Athenian hippotrophic families, of his two sons and successors Hippias and Hipparchos.
- 66 Plut. *Cim.* 4.3.
- 67 On this point see Kyle 1993, 158; Raschke 1988, 40; Kurke 1991, 179–180.
- 68 For Kylon's Olympic victory and his attempt to seize power in Athens see Hdt. 5.71; Thuc. 1.126; Plut. *Sol.* 12.1; Paus. 1.28.1.
- 69 Paus. 6.13.9–10.
- 70 Ebert 1972, no. 6 = *Anth.Pal.* 6.135.
- 71 Ebert 1972, no. 7 = Paus. 6.13.9–10.
- 72 See in general Nicholson 2005, especially 95–116 for Pheidolas and Lykos.
- 73 Nicholson 2005.
- 74 Giddens 1990, 22–24.
- 75 For the notion of subject positions Lacan 1977; Woodward 2002, 17–19.
- 76 E.g. Pind. *Pyth.* 10; *Nem.* 6.
- 77 For the construction of family traditions of athletic excellence through epinician poetry see also Fearn 2011.
- 78 For examples beyond Athens of the strategy of pursuing both athletic and equestrian victories by individuals and families see Golden 2008, 23.
- 79 Hdt. 6.125.
- 80 For hostile Alkmeonid popular traditions see Thomas 1989, 261–282.
- 81 For chariot-racing in Classical Athens see in general Golden 1997.
- 82 Hdt. 6.126–130, cf. section 3 of the present chapter.
- 83 For this monument see section 6 of the present chapter and Figure 2.1.
- 84 The Agariste betrothal episode is mentioned in later sources primarily in connection with the ostentatious display of luxury of the Sybarite suitor Smindyrides (or

- Mindyrides according to Diodorus Siculus). See Ath. 6.273b–c; 12.541b–c = Timaios of Tauromenion *FGRH* 566 F 9; 14.628c–d; Ael. *VH* 12.24; Diod. Sic. 8.19; *Suda*, Συβαρίται.
- 85 Murray 2001, 20–21.
- 86 Hdt. 6.123.1; Isoc. 16.26; Arist. [*Ath.Pol.*] 20.4. The Alkmeonid tradition of conflict with the Peisistratids was complemented by the various details of the narrative of persecution due to the Kylonian *agos*, e.g. the story of the digging up of Alkmeonid tombs as a result of the conflict between Kleisthenes and Isagoras in 509/8 BCE: Arist. [*Ath.Pol.*] 1; Thuc. 1.126.12 with the commentary by Hornblower 1991, 210. For the Alkmeonid “curse” and oral traditions see Gagné 2013, 206–209.
- 87 Isoc. 16.27–28.
- 88 For the victories of Alkmeonides and their monumental commemoration see section 6 of the present chapter.
- 89 Pind. *Pyth.* 7, 10–12.
- 90 For Megakles IV see Scholia Pind. *Pyth.* 7, p. 201 Dr. For Alkibiades see Thuc. 6.16.2 and Moretti 1957, no. 345 for additional testimonia.
- 91 Cf. a near contemporary to Megakles IV vase that might have been commissioned in commemoration of his 486 BCE Pythian victory. It depicts a certain “Alkmeon” riding a chariot, possibly a reference to the Alkmeonids’ earliest Olympic *tethrip-pon* victory of 592 BCE. See Webster 1972, 57 and Nicholson 2005, 28–29.
- 92 See Brenne 2002, nos. T 1/101–105, 112–114; cf. also T 1/158, an *ostrakon* for the same Megakles, bearing an illustration of a horse-rider. For other *ostraka* for Megakles as well as a discussion of the circumstances of his ostracisms see Forsdyke 2005, 152–160, especially 155–156.
- 93 Pind. *Pyth.* 7, 18–21.
- 94 Hdt. 6.122.1. For the textual tradition and the historical reliability of the passage see Scott 2005, 409.
- 95 Plut. *Arist.* 5.5–6.
- 96 For the various stories, with testimonia, explaining Kallias’ wealth and his nickname *lakkoploutos* see Davies 1971, 260. For his three Olympic victories see the scholia in Ar. *Nub.* 64 with a discussion by Kyle 1993, 203, no. 31, and Moretti 1957, no. 164. For the athletic record of the Kalliads see Kyle 1993, 112; Hawke 2013.
- 97 Bousquet 1992 = SEG 42.466. The victories of Kallias III probably date to the late fifth or early fourth century BCE.
- 98 See in general the remarks by Trigger 1990, 124–128 in connection with monumental architecture and luxury goods.
- 99 See also Papakonstantinou 2014a.
- 100 See studies in Mirzoeff 2002, especially Rogoff 2002. Cf. also Mirzoeff 2001 and 2009.
- 101 For monuments as embodiments of memorial consciousness see Nora 1989, 12. My thinking on the function and meaning-generating power of monuments owes a great deal to Savage 1997.
- 102 H.-V. Herrmann 1988; Rausa 1994; Smith 2007. See also Whitley 2011 for trends in dedicatory behavior in Olympia during the late Archaic and early Classical periods.
- 103 E.g. the monument for the Athenian pankratiast Kallias displayed in the Athenian Acropolis, Raubitschek 1949, no. 164.
- 104 E.g. the monuments for Theogenes of Thasos, Moretti 1953, no. 21 and Ebert 1972, no. 37; the Spartan Chionis, Paus. 6.13.2., for whom see below; and Oibotas of Paleia, Paus. 6.3.8.
- 105 See Moretti 1957 nos. 132, 138 (Damaratos); 189, 200 (Theopompos I); and 313, 317 (Theopompos II) as well as Paus. 6.10.4 for their statues. Diagoras and his five sons and grandsons, all Olympic victors in heavy events, were also commemorated

- with victory statues in Olympia, see Nicholson 2018; and Smith 2007, 99 for other examples of statue groups of family members as athletic and equestrian victors. For family dedications and representations see Löhr 2000 for the Archaic and Classical periods and Ma 2013, Chapter 6 for the Hellenistic period.
- 106 Christesen 2010.
- 107 Hdt. 6.103.4. For Euagoras see Moretti 1957, nos. 110, 113 and 117. Moretti dates Euagoras' victories in 548, 544 and 540 BCE.
- 108 Hdt. 6.103.3; Plut. *Cat. Mai.* 5.4; Ael. *VH* 9.32.
- 109 For horse sacrifices and burials in ancient Greece see Kosmetatou 1993; Reese 1995. In Athens, horse burials were practiced in the Archaic period since at least the mid-seventh century BCE, see Morris 1987, 129–130.
- 110 Moretti 1953, no. 4. See also Kyle 1993, 196, no. A 6.
- 111 Moretti 1953, no. 5 and Ebert 1972 no. 3. It should be noted that it is likely that an Alkmeonid commissioned and dedicated a *kouros* at the Ptoion at around the same time as the column recording the equestrian victory of Alkmeonides I. See Richter 1970, 122–123, no. 145 and Anderson 2000, 400, n.53.
- 112 Jeffery 1961, 73; Davies 1971, nos. 653 and 9688 III.
- 113 For the Alkmeonid exile during Peisistratid rule and the monument of Alkmeonides in the Ptoion see Bicknell 1970, 131; Ebert 1972, 38–39. For issues related to the exile of Alkmeonids in various periods during the sixth century BCE see Anderson 2000.
- 114 Schachter 1994.
- 115 For the *kouroi* statues in the Apollo Ptoios sanctuary in Boeotia see Ducat 1971 and Schachter 1994.
- 116 For Hipparchos' dedication at the Ptoion see Bizard 1903, 237–241. Schachter 1994, 302–304 dates the monument to shortly before 519 BCE.
- 117 See Nicholson 2005, 54–57.
- 118 Paus. 6.6.1.
- 119 *IvO* 146.
- 120 Raubitschek 1949, no. 21.
- 121 Epicharinos, Paus. 1.23.9; Raubitschek 1949, no. 120. Hermolykos, Paus. 1.23.10. Pronapes, Raubitschek 1949, no. 174.
- 122 Plut. *Alc.* 16.5; Ath. 12.534d; Paus. 1.22.6–7.
- 123 Dedication in the Acropolis, Raubitschek 1949, no. 76; Moretti 1953, no. 11; and Romano 1998. For Phayllos in the battle of Salamis see Hdt. 8.47. Phayllos also dedicated a statue in Delphi, Paus. 10.9.2. For further testimonia see Golden 2004, 131–132.
- 124 Hurwit 1999, 126.
- 125 Cf. the increasing numbers of equestrian themes in sixth-century BCE Athenian vase-painting, see Goossens and Thielemans 1996. See also the comments by Scanlon 2004, 69–77; Papakonstantinou 2014a, 94–95.
- 126 D'Onofrio 1982, 165; Day 1989, 21; Stewart 1990, 109–110; Meyer 1993, 107.
- 127 Willemsen 1963, 110–117; *IG* 1³.1213.
- 128 For the possibility that this monument commemorated an Alkmeonid see Willemsen 1963, 110–117. Cf. the misgivings by Davies 1971, 372 and Kyle 1993, 223–224, no. P 101.
- 129 Richter 1961, no. 25.
- 130 Richter 1961, no. 26.
- 131 Richter 1961, no. 31.
- 132 Richter 1961, no. 70 and Jeffery 1962, 141, no. 53; Richter 1961, no. 71.
- 133 NAMA no. 3476, illustrated in Philadelphus 1922; Miller 2004, 74 and 173; and www.namuseum.gr/collections/sculpture/archaic/archaic19-en.html (accessed September 29, 2018). NAMA no. 3477, illustrated in Miller 2004, 175; and www.nam

useum.gr/collections/sculpture/archaic/archaic20a-en.html (accessed September 29, 2018). Kerameikos museum P1002, illustrated in Eliopoulos 2009, 27.

- 134 For restrictions on elite conspicuous consumption, especially in the field of funerary display, in sixth-century BCE Athens see Papakonstantinou 2014a, especially 91–95.

Games, spectators and communal identities

As any innately antagonistic activity, sport can unify and divide. In the preceding chapter I have explored how sport, as embodied performance and through acts of commemoration, was employed by social elites in Archaic and early Classical Greece as part of the process of articulating status identities. In sport, as in other manifestations of social life, group and individual identities operate primarily in opposition to different sets of identities, embraced by different groups and individuals. In this way sport can shape oppositional discourses, generate conflict and exacerbate social distinctions. Distinctions in and through sport are often institutionalized and legitimized by formal and informal injunctions and prescriptions. Even at its most rudimentary level the practice of sport is inconceivable without rules. The kind of rules, however, that a society adopts for its sports are revealing about the priorities and structure of the society in question. It follows that as social conditions change, so do the rules and conditions within which sport is practiced. Furthermore, what is accepted as normal practice or taboo in sport is frequently conditioned by the preconceptions and inclinations internalized by the people who sustain the popularity of sport, i.e. fans and spectators. In this chapter I examine some key facets of the ideological malleability and multivocality of Greek sport, first by turning my attention to sport spectatorship, before delving into an analysis of how statutory and cultural prescriptions germane to Greek sport developed over time.

I Spectatorship

Sport is the totality of corporeal sensations and exertion, materiality and discursive representation of physical competition. Sport spectators have always been an integral part of this equation – indeed comparative studies suggest that the affective aspect of sport is equally consequential among athletes and spectators. As Noel Dyck and Eduardo Archetti point out, “an individual’s embodied discoveries or achievements cannot be readily verified or discursively celebrated without the assistance of knowing witnesses.”¹ The intertwined nature of the relationship between athletes and spectators can be a powerful catalyst of athletic performance. The vicarious thrill and overall excitement, for instance, felt by spectators who

watch performers challenge their physical limitations and achieve memorable victories is a potent motivation for athletes that cannot be underestimated. In the case of Greek sport, spectators were the solid foundation of its popularity and success. Even though spectators do not receive nearly as much coverage as athletes in the extant record, evidence points to the commitment and enthusiasm of many Greeks towards sport, especially after the consolidation of the circuit of major interstate games in the sixth century BCE. The earliest literary descriptions of athletic contests in the Homeric epics contain some references to spectator behavior. In later periods literary sources often expound on how spectators endured long journeys and deplorable conditions at festival sites in order to enjoy the athletic contests, especially at one of the *periodos* games.² It is estimated that many thousands flocked to the major sanctuaries during the athletic festivals. For some, visiting Olympia or one of the major sanctuaries during the games was the experience of a lifetime. Others were seasoned and committed visitors, closer to what we today call sport fans. Kaikilios, a third-century CE baker from Veroia, was such an avid Olympic fan: his tombstone proudly declares that he attended the Olympic games 12 times.³

Kaikilios and others like him were highly identified fans, i.e. committed and informed supporters of a particular athlete, event or contest who regularly attended athletic games. They exercised their personal agency in selecting to spend monetary resources and time in attending panhellenic festivals, often at great distances from their home cities. These fans were undoubtedly conversant with technical aspects of sport. In all likelihood they were also familiar with the careers and records of many contemporary and past athletes. Beyond these loyal fans, and given the popularity and omnipresence of sport especially during the post-Classical period, many if not most Greeks were at least moderately familiar with specific aspects of sport in their cities and beyond. This group probably comprised the biggest number of sport spectators. They were casual sport spectators that exhibited a low identification with professional athletes and the world of competitive sport at large. They attended athletic games only occasionally, usually in their home cities, but could be vaguely aware of the achievements of star athletes of their day or the recent past – note, for instance, how the early fifth century BCE runner and pentathlete Phayllos from Kroton is casually mentioned by Aristophanes in the *Acharnians* and the *Wasps* with the expectation that the Athenian audience would have understood the reference.⁴ Phayllos is, in fact, a good case study on how an athlete could become a household name in a Greek city, in this case Athens. As noted in the previous chapter, according to Herodotus (8.47) Phayllos fought in the battle of Salamis with a ship that he equipped at his own expense and at some point in the fifth century BCE he dedicated a monument in the Athenian Acropolis in which he emphasized both his athletic achievements and his contribution to the critical naval battle during the Persian wars.⁵ Hence, given his special Athenian connection and the general familiarity of many Athenians with sport, most Athenians in the 420s BCE would have known who Phayllos was, although possibly they would not have been intimately familiar with his athletic achievements. This is probably, in this case, another reason why Aristophanes

eschewed details related to Phayllos' athletic victories and confined himself instead to generic references to Phayllos' skills as a runner.

During competition highly identified Greek fans behaved in a vivacious and often interactive manner with athletes and officials. This was the case for both athletic and equestrian events: Homer portrays spectators as animated and informed about the intricacies of chariot-racing. The narrative of the funeral games for Patroklos contains a vignette of two spectators/Achaean warriors arguing and betting on the outcome of the chariot-race.⁶ Moreover, the Hellenistic ephibarchic law of Amphipolis allows the local *ephebeia* trainees to watch athletic contests and other spectacles and prescribes that the *ephebarch* should see to it that his charges "shall not clap or whistle during the spectacle, but will watch in silence and in an orderly fashion."⁷ Also of Hellenistic date, the Olympic boxing final of 212 BCE between the reigning Olympic champion Kleitomachos of Thebes and Aristonikos from Egypt, further discussed in section 5 of the present chapter, portrays Olympic fans as cognizant of both the technicalities of sport but also the stakes, in the wider trajectory of identity politics, of an Olympic victory.⁸ According to Polybios, it was the communication between spectators and athletes and the emotive response of the former to what the two competitors represented (an underdog versus a powerhouse, and an Egyptian versus a Greek) that shifted the dynamic of the match and decided its outcome.

Similar glimpses on spectator attitudes and behavior as well as their potential impact on the outcome of contests, at times beyond the framework of formal regulations, are provided by literary texts and agonistic inscriptions of the Hellenistic and Roman Imperial periods. An example is provided by an early first-century CE honorary decree proposed by M. Vetulenus Laetus, a nobleman from Elis, concerning the pankratiast Tiberius Claudius Rufus from Smyrna and his performance at the Olympic games.⁹ According to this decree, Rufus conducted himself in an exemplary fashion in front of the *hellanodikai* during the mandatory training period that preceded the contests. Then during the games he reached the *pankration* final after competing in every round and fought against an opponent who had enjoyed a bye. Rufus and his unnamed opponent in the final fought on until night intervened, which would normally lead the *hellanodikai* to declare a draw. However, in this case a "sacred" victory was awarded to Rufus – the first time ever that this occurred in the Olympic games.¹⁰ The spectators' reaction to Rufus's performance was, always according to the honorary decree, a major factor in this unprecedented outcome. Rufus allegedly fought with such endurance and determination that all spectators, Eleians as well as those who gathered in Olympia from other parts of the Greek world, marveled at his performance.¹¹

This description owes much to the rhetorical flourish characteristic of athletic honorary inscriptions of the Imperial period. That does not mean, however, that we should doubt that Olympic fans were appreciative of the performative aspects of athletic competitions and that they could often be openly expressive in their support or disapprobation of athletes. As sources assert or imply, such vocal approbation at time influenced the verdict of officials regarding indecisive bouts or

races. In one case Posidippos describes how, following a tight race, the crowd's favorable reaction was critical in awarding the Pythian *tethrippon* crown of 274 or 270 BCE to Kallikrates of Samos.¹² The excitement and vocalization documented for the spectators of major contests is also implied in sources that pertain to games of local caliber. In fact one would expect the spectators of a *themis* in a small community, given their familiarity and intimate relationships with several contestants in such games, to be even more committed and excited about the contests. Hence an attempt to sway the outcome of a bout is intimated in a third-century CE agonistic inscription from Phaselis which commemorated the joint victory (συνστερ[θεις], l. 1) of an unknown wrestler at the *themis* of Eukratidas.¹³ The spectators are depicted as animated and the reference to the crowd's acclamation (καθὼς τὸ π[λῆ |θος ἐπ]εβοήσατο ll. 2–3) suggests that the spectators threw their weight behind the official's decision to award a joint victory.¹⁴

Beyond particular case studies, late antique authors occasionally comment on the behavior of sport spectators. Aelian argued that sport crowds were eager to cheer their favorite athletes even if they did not always gauge the technical subtleties of sport.¹⁵ Moreover, Dio Chrysostom describes, in an exaggerated and hostile manner, wildly animated sport spectators in Alexandria.¹⁶ Dio, along with Polybius in the passage discussed above, attributed the vivacious reactions of sport spectators to what they perceived as the irrational and mercurial psychology of the masses, a view that partly derived from elitist stereotypes over the lower social orders.¹⁷ However, even such slanted views presupposed a vivid engagement of audiences with athletes, sport performances and indeed other aspects of public life. There is plenty of evidence to suggest that, while in public, Greeks often interacted in an effervescent and even pugnacious manner. In the field of sport, for the highly identified fans such interaction was informed by technical knowledge and genuine interest in sport and spectacles. Some evidence even suggests that in certain cases, highly identified fans of ancient athletes exhibited what is today called “parasocial interaction,” i.e. a one-sided relationship where the fan is well-informed of the sport achievements and other aspects of life of an athlete or other celebrity.¹⁸

Spectators with a low degree of identification with professional sport, on the other hand, aimed primarily at the leisure and merriment that watching a sporting competition afforded. Many of these casual sport spectators were among the groups that, with few notable exceptions, were *de jure* or *de facto* banned from playing sports in *gymnasia* and competing in contests. While we can assume on the basis of comparative evidence (e.g. Rome) that spectators with both high and low identification with sport could occasionally exploit the visibility and popularity of agonistic festivals to voice social concerns, the literary and especially the epigraphic record, which mainly reflected the priorities and values of social elites, overwhelmingly pass in silence incidents that could be construed as signs of discontent or as challenges to the status quo.¹⁹ That was especially the case in the Imperial period when elites largely fostered a class and ethnic Hellenic identity through participation in sport and agonistic euergetism. The same elites, who had much to gain from the maintenance of the

status quo, evinced an image of civic conformism and integration through the epigraphic representation of agonistic festivals and other facets of public life.²⁰

Yet indirect clues suggest that confrontations must have been more frequent than what honorary inscriptions and civic decrees at face value intimate. Order-enforcing *masteigoforoi* (whip-bearers) and *rabdoukhoi* (rod-bearers) are mentioned in connection with festivals, a fact that indicates the ever-present prospect of popular uproar. In the epigraphic dossier of 125 CE establishing the musical and athletic contest named after him, C. Iulius Demosthenes of Oinoanda provides for the presence of whip-bearers charged with overseeing *eukosmia* (good behavior).²¹ A few decades earlier, a pair of male and female *agonothetai* from Perge honored the *masteigoforoi* who served under them.²² Such attendants with order-enforcing authority are also attested for major games, e.g. the Italika Sebastia in Naples.²³ Even less festive public events, e.g. assembly meetings and funerals, sometimes turned into occasions of discontent and pandemonium. Referring to the meetings of the people of Alexandria Dio Chrysostom talks of “upheaval, buffoonery and scurrility.”²⁴ The same author also explicitly refers to the boisterous nature of entertainments and pastimes in Alexandria.²⁵ Funerals, especially of socially prominent individuals, were also occasionally the stage of public remonstrations. In one case, the funeral procession of a highly born lady in Imperial Knidos was interrupted when the people snatched her body, carried it to the city’s theater and urged that it should be buried in the city.²⁶

To sum up, Greek spectators, especially highly identified sport fans in the major games, are portrayed as cognizant of the technicalities and history of sport, but at the same time as volatile, manipulable and susceptible to the vagaries and emotions of athletic contests. Moreover, spectators in Greek games at times attempted to influence the outcome of indecisive contests. It is noteworthy that whereas literary authors frequently castigated spectator reactions, honorary athletic inscriptions present spectator intervention, especially if such an intervention contributed in deciding a victory or a draw, as an acknowledgement of a superb athletic performance. In that sense, references in athletic inscriptions to active spectator support were meant to be understood as tokens of distinction, similar to other achievements (e.g. winning without a bye) that athletes of the Imperial period so eagerly recorded and propagated. Finally, scattered references from inscriptions mainly of the Imperial period allude to the possibility of discontent or disturbances by spectators and other participants in festivals. It is not farfetched to imagine such incidents, given the high number of attendees in even local festivals. The organizing authorities, including sanctuary personnel, civic officials or wealthy *agonothetai*, were eager to erase any reminders of such incidents from publicly displayed inscriptions and communal memory. Instead they promoted a narrative of carefully staged, peaceful, bountiful and enjoyable agonistic festivals. This narrative was contingent on a detailed, strict and efficiently implemented set of regulations on and off the athletic field.

2 Regulations and regulatory bodies

Sport is by definition hedged by rules that govern how it is played. Through its regulatory framework sport can contribute to conditions of social and ideological conflict or accommodation. At the most basic informal level sport rules can be decided *ad hoc* by players and adapted as a particular game develops. In cases where sport is popular, institutionalized and widely practiced technical rules that athletes and other relevant persons (e.g. officials) are obliged to conform to are decided in advance and are published in written form. In fact for many sport historians the articulation of a clear set of formal regulations is perceived as a critical turning point for the emergence of organized/institutionalized sport. Equally important are the frequently informal but culturally conditioned rules, that usually operate in alignment with widely shared values and concerns (e.g. the role of women and slaves in a patriarchal society), and which dictate who can play or be excluded from sport as well as the social/religious/educational contexts that are deemed acceptable for the practice of sport.

We should not think, however, of technical and cultural norms as completely disparate and immutable categories. On the contrary, in the case of ancient Greek sport technical/logistical prescriptions and cultural norms co-existed in a continuous reflexive relationship with each other. Cultural norms and beliefs, for instance, were often put into practice, at times even acquiring formal legal validity, e.g. through legally binding foundations that established agonistic festivals or through the one-off provisions adopted by an *agonothetes* for a particular athletic contest.

Greek sport was a regulated and institutionalized practice since the Archaic period.²⁷ Regulatory bodies, e.g. boards of *hellanodikai* or *agonothetai*, were central in the process of enacting and enforcing rules on sport training and competition. The enactment and implementation of formal and informal rules to a certain extent framed and conditioned the meanings emanating from the practice of sport. Rules fixed the conceptual boundaries of sport practices, but at the same time these rules were also contingent and subject to change. Infractions of the formal/technical rules could at times lead to interpersonal or even interstate disputes – as was, for instance, the dispute between Athens and the Olympic authorities in 332 BCE over the punishment of the Athenian pentathlete Kallippos and the ensuing boycott of the games by Athens.²⁸ However, it was the cultural norms that allowed, barred or qualified access to athletic venues and practices that were most intensely debated in Greek antiquity. That was because such norms were closely intertwined with deeply held beliefs on defining identity markers, including social class, gender, age and legal status. What normative definitions of sport, and especially athletic victory, meant for individuals and groups that attached themselves in one or more of these identity categories was for the Greeks an evolving field of negotiation and contestation. In other words, the regulatory framework of sport did not merely establish the boundaries of sport practices, but it also contributed in a meaningful way to the creation, reinforcement, redefinition and transgression of a variety of social and cultural boundaries.²⁹

Donald Kyle aptly described participation in Greek competitive sport as being governed by the “oily trinity”: free, Greek and male.³⁰ Those who did not conform with these fundamental underpinnings of Greek hegemonic masculinity had very limited opportunities to practice sport, especially during the Archaic and Classical periods. But, as already pointed out in the previous chapter, even within the restricted group of adult males with full-citizen rights, in many instances access to sport could be prohibitive for many due to elitist prejudice and lack of financial resources. In many Greek cities – with Athens and Sparta being the best documented cases – citizens of middling social backgrounds had more opportunities, after the late sixth century BCE, to practice sport and compete in games. Even in these communities, however, access to competitive sport usually remained hermetically closed for individuals in subaltern groups (e.g. women, slaves). In the Imperial period the picture becomes more nuanced. There is, for instance, some evidence regarding the involvement of women in athletic training in a very small number of cities. There were also events for girls in select major games (e.g. Isthmia, Sebasta) but not, it should be emphasized, in local games. Moreover, in many Greek communities of the Imperial period a sustained effort was underway to integrate women and slaves into mainstream activities of agonistic festivals, including donations of oil at the *gymnasion* and civic banquets. This temporary relaxation of the usual rules of exclusion from *gymnasia* for women and slaves on special occasions can be interpreted as an attempt to promote social accommodation and formulate a narrative of peaceful co-existence between social groups in the context of civic festivals.

Similar to sport, the concept and practice of law, encompassing in its wider scope formal and informal proscriptions, methods of enforcement, and reception by the public, is a cultural category susceptible to the vacillations of social movements and historical change. Law operates in multiple ways that affects modes of thought and shapes social relationships while at the same time being subjected to the respect, challenges and often abuses of social agents.

Rules with legal force existed in Greece since at least the late Bronze Age but are more fully documented for the communities of the Archaic and later periods. The Homeric epics and Hesiod’s poems contain fairly detailed descriptions of legal procedure as well as allusions to orally transmitted community rules.³¹ In some communities texts of legal import (statutes, decrees) were promulgated, inscribed and publicly displayed since the second half of the seventh century BCE.³² Late literary sources preserve echoes of comprehensive overhauls of the legal systems of some Archaic cities implemented by “lawgivers.”³³ During the same period, and especially during the sixth century BCE, the evidence suggests a gradual expansion, specialization and sophistication of the legal apparatus of Greek polities. For the Classical and later periods the evidence allows an in-depth study of the legal systems of some Greek *poleis* (e.g. Athens, Gortyn) and Hellenistic kingdoms (e.g. Ptolemaic Egypt), but it is frustratingly silent or lacunose about others. It is also worth noting that during the Hellenistic and Imperial periods many Greek communities preserved and operated, at the local

level, legal institutions of bygone eras even though in most cases they had surrendered their political autonomy to the encroaching empires that dominated the eastern Mediterranean.

Within this framework, city-states often promulgated laws that regulated aspects of civic athletic training, games and victory. Moreover, the panhellenic games were conducted within the framework of a detailed set of legal regulations that was meant to be applicable to participants from the entire Greek world. In the remainder of this chapter I will examine in more detail cases of both formal regulations on sport, including technical rules and civic statutory enactments, as well as cultural norms that reflect the constant negotiation of the value of sport within Greek communities. More specifically, I will explore the law of Solon on athletic rewards and the so-called *prytaneion* decree as instances of legislation that negotiated the relationship between athletes and their communities; examples of the legal template governing the conduct of panhellenic athletic contests, with particular emphasis on the Olympic games as a catalyst of Hellenicity during the Classical and post-Classical periods; and finally, the framework for the establishment and conduct of games of local and regional appeal in the Hellenistic period. I will also explore facets of the reception of legally promulgated rules by the athletes and the communities that enacted them, including their impact on sport perceptions and practices.

3 Athenian rewards for athletes

As already noted, during the sixth century BCE aristocratic signifiers of power, including exclusive intra-elite sport, were increasingly coming under attack by certain quarters and there were attempts to re-negotiate and re-articulate the meaning and influence of elite lifestyles and practices.³⁴ In many Greek cities these attempts to reconfigure the import of elite practices revolved around the enactment and implementation of civic statutes. “Sumptuary” legislation, i.e. legislation that aimed at regulating forms of elite material extravagance, was an example of such civic statutory enactments. Other civic legislation of the Archaic period attempted to rearrange the balance of power between elite families. The motives for these diverse statutes were certainly complex, and it is likely that intra-elite strife can account for some of them. Even though in many cases Archaic legislation did not openly challenge the elites’ monopoly on political power, it was certainly the case that by the late Archaic period this monopoly was ideologically undermined. Again, the reasons for this development were multiple and complex. In the field of lawmaking, the pressure that the citizenry at large could exert was significant, especially regarding how these laws were enacted and enforced, which in turn had an impact on the long-term outlook of legislation.

Many of these trends can be clearly observed in Archaic and Classical Athens. In a well-documented episode of Archaic Athenian history, Solon was appointed archon with extraordinary powers in the early sixth century BCE with the objective of mediating in the acute social and economic crisis afflicting the

city. Among the numerous laws attributed to Solon there is a regulation, originally perhaps a clause of a statute, stipulating the rewards to be granted to victors in the Olympic (500 drachmas) and Isthmian (100 drachmas) games.³⁵ Moreover, some sources attribute to Solon laws pertaining to athletic morality and the management of athletic facilities but these are usually discounted as anachronistic.³⁶ If we assume that the law on rewards was genuinely Solonian, the references to monetary sums suggests that it was updated at least once a few decades after Solon, most likely during the late sixth century BCE. This suggests that the issue of the victors' rewards, as well as the wider issue of the relationship between state, community and sport victors was of pressing importance for Athenian civic authorities after Solon.

Was the law attributed to Solon the first attempt in Archaic Athens to legally introduce and regulate material rewards to athletic victors? The question cannot be answered unequivocally, although it has been argued that the law in question in all likelihood curtailed the amounts that victors were previously receiving by the state.³⁷ It is also worth noting that the material and symbolic value of prizes and other accolades bestowed on athletic victors were at the forefront of the critical discourse on sport generated by Archaic literati.³⁸ According to these critics, the value of the rewards – both monetary and symbolic – that athletes were receiving was incommensurate to the contribution of these athletes to their communities. Nevertheless, the value of the rewards, especially for Olympic victors, prescribed in the law attributed to Solon was still pretty high. But if we accept the *communis opinio* that during the Archaic period it was primarily citizens of the most well-heeled backgrounds who could realistically compete for and achieve the majority of prestigious panhellenic victories, then for most victors the exact amount awarded was perhaps not of the primary importance. Hence most likely the real objective of the law in question was to intervene in the debates and attempt to shift popular perceptions on the value of sport, especially in connection with the “Homeric” model of elite sport that some Athenian aristocrats eagerly embraced. The law, and all those civic bodies who endorsed and enforced it, standardized the rewards in an attempt to appropriate and thus re-define on behalf of the community, without however completely abolishing, aristocratic perceptions of sport as a power discourse, including the association between sport, material wealth and claims to social and political ascendancy.

The so-called *prytaneion* decree, tentatively dated to the 430s or 420s BCE, provides another glimpse into Athenian attempts, this time in the context of the democracy, to regulate rewards on Athenian victors in athletic and equestrian contests. The fragmentary decree bestows permanent dining rights (*sitesis*) in the Athenian *prytaneion* to the descendants of Harmodios and Aristogeiton, to the athletic and equestrian victors in the four panhellenic games as well as to other prominent Athenians.³⁹ The decree distinguishes between the right of *sitesis* for victors in athletic events and equestrian victors in two different provisions which use similar language. It is, however, likely that the missing parts contained nuances that made the distinction indispensable. At a more fundamental level the

need to add a separate clause for equestrian victors might be related to the debates and perceptions on equestrian sport in fifth century BCE Athens, especially in connection with the often ambivalent Athenian views on the civic value and popularity of equestrian sport.⁴⁰ Viewed in this light, the clause for equestrian victors was most likely an addendum that served as statutory clarification regarding the eligibility of the victors in question for *sitesis* in the *prytaneion*.⁴¹

Both clauses also specify that the right to *sitesis* is granted in accordance with what is written “in the stele in the *prytaneion*” (ll. 14–15 and 18), a reference to another formal document that regulated in more detail the rewards to Athenian victors in major games. These dining rights were presumably supplementary to the monetary rewards enshrined in the law attributed to Solon. The *prytaneion* dining privilege had nevertheless a powerful leveling symbolism that most Athenians could not have failed to notice. The Classical Athenian *prytaneion* was the most prominent ceremonial building of the city that housed the common hearth, was the setting for high-profile public banquets, occasionally doubled as a court of justice and served as starting point for important religious processions.⁴² Despite its alleged origins in the mythical past of Athens (synoecism of Theseus), by the fifth century BCE the *prytaneion* was, in other words, a core constituent of the Athenian democracy. By inviting athletic and equestrian victors, many hailing from elite social backgrounds, to dine regularly in this iconic institution of the Athenian democracy, the Athenian council and *demos*, i.e. the issuing authorities of the *prytaneion* decree, endeavored to integrate the Athenian victors into the daily operations of egalitarian governance. The award of *sitesis* for victorious athletes was a special privilege that in the mind of most Athenians clearly did not contradict the sweeping levelling ethos of the Athenian political landscape, possibly because of the ascendant “Civic” sports model that ideologically associated sport victories with community values.

4 Sports officials

In addition to laws pertaining to athletes of particular communities, there existed since the Archaic period a corpus of regulations with legal force that governed the conduct of periodically held athletic contests. These regulations were usually enacted by the entity that controlled the sanctuary associated with the games in question, but were applicable to all participants at the games regardless of their city of origin. Eventually technical rules pertaining to specific events became standardized and universally adopted. Standardization of technical rules for particular events was a *de facto* precondition for the increasing participation of athletes in the elaborate network of panhellenic and local games. The emergence of a set of universally respected set of technical rules for athletic events, in other words, was a major factor in the disembedding of Greek sport from its localized contexts. Rules that dealt with the logistical aspects of games, on the other hand, including the eligibility and age-divisions of athletes or the prizes bestowed to victors, were decided by the organizing

authorities or, in cases of contests funded by members of the civic elite during the Hellenistic and Imperial periods, by the games' sponsor and chief overseer (*agonothetes*).

In the earliest attested athletic games, i.e. funeral games for prominent individuals and other one-off contests, it is precisely the organizer and sponsor of prizes that largely decided the regulatory framework of the games. Frequently the organizer/sponsor also assumed a supervisory capacity and acted as umpire. In *Il.* 23, 566–613 Achilles, in his capacity as sponsor and supervisor of the games, is faced with a dispute between two contestants (Menelaos and Antilochos) in the chariot-race.⁴³ The issue at hand is deciding the runner-up of the race: Antilochos has finished second but Menelaos argued that he did so by driving his chariot recklessly and hence by endangering the life of both competitors. Following a fiery speech by Menelaos, Antilochos bowed to Menelaos' seniority and superior social standing and agreed to give up his prize. The arrangement met with the approval of the organizer, Achilles, who is presented as the ultimate authority in distributing the prizes, often at whim – e.g. when he awarded the first prize for javelin to Agamemon without competition, *Hom. Il.* 23, 890–895 – and not always on the basis of athletic performance but in keeping with the Homeric aristocratic code of hierarchy and reciprocity. In the betrothal trials for Agariste, extensively discussed in the previous chapter, the organizer Kleisthenes of Sikyon was also presented as actively regulating the various events in accordance with his personal agenda and the prevalent code of elitist morality and justice.

The emergence and consolidation during the Archaic period of periodically held athletic contests, including most notably the four major interstate games, altered radically the regulatory framework of Greek athletics.⁴⁴ Moreover, beginning in the sixth century BCE specialized facilities for athletic training, most notably the *gymnasion* and the *palaistra*, were constructed in cities as well as at the sites of panhellenic athletic festivals.⁴⁵ The increasing proliferation and specialization of athletic venues and practices inevitably led to the articulation of detailed, formal regulations governing the administration of games and facilities. But growth alone cannot account for the context of enactment, format and content of the regulations for athletic contests. The promulgation of legal frameworks for sport practices corresponded in many respects to the emergence and development of laws which regulated other aspects of life in the Greek world. Many of the rules germane to athletics are encountered, either identical or with slight variations, in communities and other sites of athletic activity across the Greek world. Correlatively, some of the rules in question (e.g. the Olympic *ekecheiria*) were endowed with interstate or even panhellenic validity. On the other hand, local conditions often led the appropriate authorities to adopt specific, regionally applicable rules. In many instances, local regulations of athletic practices, e.g. regarding eligibility in the *ephebeia* of a particular city, were crucial in articulating community ideology. Finally, it should be emphasized that in most cases laws regulating athletic practices appear to be after the fact responses to actual troublesome situations, not preemptive provisions on envisaged cases of rule infringement.

The rules regulating the organization and conduct of the Olympic games are adequately documented and constitute a convenient starting point.⁴⁶ The *hellanodikai*, a board of Eleian officials who were selected by lot and served for one Olympic cycle, were the major executive body charged with supervising the games, especially with regard to the enforcement of Olympic rules before and during the festival.⁴⁷ The very term *hellanodikai* strongly suggests the appeal of the panhellenic status of the Olympic sanctuary and games. Although references to the *hellanodikai* initially occur in some inscriptions of the fifth century BCE, their functions and responsibilities are attested primarily by authors of the Imperial period.⁴⁸ Before the festival, the *hellanodikai* superintended the athletes' month of training in Elis, led the procession to Olympia, and administered the oaths of the athletes, their trainers and their relatives in the *bouleuterion*.⁴⁹ Moreover, they adjudicated on whether athletes were qualified, both physically and in terms of ethnic origin to compete and assigned them in age-groups.⁵⁰ During the games, they acted as umpires and enforced the rules of each event. Furthermore, they awarded the wreaths to the victors and presided over the final feast.⁵¹

Through the implementation of the regulatory framework governing agonistic festivals the class of athletic umpires – the *hellanodikai* of the Olympic and other major games, as well as the *agonothetai* who doubled as officials during contests in local games of the Imperial period – were crucial in the process of generating meanings through sport practices. In fact, it is no exaggeration to claim that in moments of legal, ideological or moral ambivalence umpires and other officials internalized and articulated dominant perceptions on the role of sport as a vehicle for the expression of values, power relations and identities. The way the legal framework of the panhellenic or local contests was implemented or adapted by these officials often led to new realities and expectations regarding the practice of sport and its widely perceived role in society. Two case studies – the episode regarding the participation in the Olympic games of Alexander I of Macedonia in the early Classical period and the creation of a new category of jointly crowned victors during the Imperial period – illustrate the process whereby the *hellanodikai* and other sport officials channeled contemporary ideological trends and consolidated or shifted perceptions of sport in the Greek world.

5 Olympia as a catalyst of Hellenicity

The story of the participation of Alexander I of Macedonia in the Olympic games is often discussed in connection with the role of sport in defining Hellenicity. Alexander I had a long and checkered reign. He collaborated with the Persians during the Persian Wars but also tried to cultivate friendly relations with southern Greek states at other periods of his reign. According to Herodotus, at some point Alexander I attempted to compete in the *stadion* race of the Olympic games. However, other Greeks who had registered for the same race demurred Alexander's Hellenic credentials and asserted that "the contest should

be for Greeks and not for barbarians.”⁵² Despite these objections and Alexander’s pro-Persian stance the Olympic *hellanodikai* decided otherwise and allowed Alexander to participate. He eventually ran a dead hit for the first place.

Some commentators have expressed doubts concerning the historicity of the episode, and some even consider it a fabrication.⁵³ There were undoubtedly practical difficulties involved in any attempt to disseminate through a text – Herodotus’ *Histories* – familiar to many Greeks an entirely fabricated story about a well-known individual – Alexander I – in a high-profile event, i.e. the Olympic games. Moreover, we know that Alexander had commissioned Pindar to write an *enkomion* or epinician and Bacchylides to compose an *enkomion*, which raises the possibility that the Macedonian king might have achieved a sports victory at a panhellenic festival.⁵⁴ At the very least, the commissioning of top-tier epinician poets suggests that Alexander made an effort to be perceived as a member of a wider Greek elite cultural *koine*. In this context it is plausible that similar to other early fifth-century BCE elites Alexander endeavored to distinguish himself in high-level sport. Hence the story of Alexander’s engagement with the Olympic games makes sense.

It is often thought that Alexander took part in the Olympic games of 480 or 476 BCE, i.e. the games immediately following the successful for the Greeks completion of the Persian wars.⁵⁵ Although not entirely improbable, a date towards the end or shortly after the denouement of the Persian wars would fall too late in Alexander’s life for an almost winning performance in the sprint race.⁵⁶ If the constraints of physical conditioning and age are taken into consideration, it is more likely that the incident described by Herodotus occurred earlier in Alexander’s life. Herodotus seems to imply Alexander competed in the men’s *stadion*: the historian does not refer to a specific age-group or to the guardians of contestants objecting to Alexander, which is what would have normally happened if Alexander was registered for the boys’ race. Hence the incident described by Herodotus, if historical, most likely took place during the first years of Alexander’s reign in the 490s or early 480s BCE.⁵⁷ The exact date wouldn’t have made much difference in the attitude of southern Greeks towards Alexander. Given that Macedonia was already a tributary state to Persia by the time Alexander ascended to the throne in 498 BCE, in the eyes of most Greeks Alexander would have been a medizer, and hence a foreign element, long before the end of the Persian wars.

Any ambivalence regarding the historicity and date of the Alexander in Olympia episode should not distract us from the possibility that the story as transmitted by Herodotus served as a real or imaginary etiological turning point for the consolidation of the association between Olympic sport and Hellenicity. Concerning Alexander of Macedonia, two narratives were clearly at work: one that portrayed him as a foreigner and thus non-eligible for competition at the Olympic games and one, reflected in the decision of the Olympic *hellanodikai* to deem him eligible to compete, that viewed positively the overtures of Macedonian elites towards mainstream Hellenic culture. Xenophon provides another example of an athlete of questionable Hellenic credentials who was admitted to the Olympic

games.⁵⁸ It concerns a Persian boy, son of Pharnabazos, who ostensibly spent some time in Sparta as an adolescent, engaged in a homosexual relationship with a slightly older Spartan and who, through the good services of king Agesilaos, competed at the boys' *stadion* in the Olympic games, possibly in 392 or 388 BCE.⁵⁹ In both of these cases (Alexander I, son of Pharnabazos) the issue of their participation in the Olympic games revolved around the negotiation of aspects of the regulatory framework, which in principle dictated that at the time these incidents took place only Greeks could compete at the Olympics. Widely held perceptions and informal cultural prescriptions on sport were also pertinent in determining the exceptional status of certain individuals of non-Greek origin vis-à-vis the regulatory framework of panhellenic games. For instance, regarding Alexander, one is reminded of Archaic and early Classical modes of victory commemoration, discussed in detail in Chapter 2, especially in connection with the often oppositional templates of "Homeric" and "Civic" athletics that ideologically dominated the perceptions and representations of upper-class sport in the period in question. Furthermore, the trend to represent athletic or equestrian victories as an individual/familial achievement that was socially embedded and obligated to a self-conscious aggregate of civic entities (citizens, *polis* institutions), had gained particular traction during Alexander's apogee in sport.⁶⁰ Very little can be surmised about how all these factors played into Alexander's participation at the Olympic games, although there should be no doubt that they did play a role. Instead Herodotus, our main source, focuses on the ethnicity of Alexander and hence the incident involving the early fifth-century Macedonian king by necessity becomes the earliest explicit indication of Hellenicity as part of the multiple identities articulated in the Olympic games.

In modern scholarship, sport has long been recognized as a prime means to foster feelings of Hellenicity throughout antiquity, especially in opposition to other groups considered by the Greeks as of lower cultural standing.⁶¹ Many correctly see the Persian wars as a turning point in this process, but the possibility that interstate sanctuaries and athletic games performed a similar function during the Archaic period should not be ruled out.⁶² Especially during the sixth century BCE the major interstate games, held in regular intervals and steadily growing in popularity, would have been a perfect stage for playing out ethnic as well as regional identities, conflicts and aspirations. The almost exclusive right of the Greeks to compete in the Olympic and other major games goes back to the early days of institutionalized sport – there is no known victor or contestant in the Olympic or other panhellenic games during the Archaic period that was not of Greek descent. There is no reason to doubt, in other words, that Greek sport did not serve as a catalyst and constituent of Hellenic identity before the early fifth century BCE.⁶³

The conditions created by the direct involvement of the Persian empire in Greek affairs elicited a more emphatic assertion of Hellenicity by audiences, athletes and the organizers of panhellenic games. In an apparent attempt to renegotiate the panhellenic appeal of the games sometime in the early fifth century BCE Eleian authorities renamed the board of officials charged with

supervising numerous aspects of the games to *hellenodikai*. It might be possible to pinpoint relatively accurately the time of change: the board of Olympic officials was known by other names (*agonothetai*; *diaitetai*) before 480 BCE and it is likely that the title *hellenodikai* was bestowed to them shortly after the Persian wars, perhaps the change officially taking effect for the first time at the Olympic games of 476 BCE.⁶⁴ Furthermore, the Persian wars clearly affected dedicatory patterns in the major sanctuaries. According to Herodotus, for instance, Greek states who fought against the Persians dedicated sumptuous monumental gifts to the gods at Delphi, Olympia and Isthmia.⁶⁵ Visitors from every corner of the Greek-speaking world who flocked to these panhellenic games in the years and decades following the completion of the Persian wars were invited, through monumental dedications, to reflect on the value of the struggle against Persia vis-à-vis other episodes in Greek history and the relative contribution (or lack thereof) that each Greek community had made to the anti-Persian cause.⁶⁶

The impact of the Persian threat and wars as a rallying point for Hellenicity was felt for decades and at times was adroitly exploited against those – e.g. Alexander I of Macedonia – whose Greek origin and cultural credentials were in doubt. Orators who took every opportunity they could find to perform in Olympia and other major interstate sanctuaries elevated Hellenicity and anti-foreign sentiments to new levels of rhetorical flourish. In his Olympic speech, delivered in the late fifth or early fourth century BCE, Gorgias of Leontini advocated concord against the Persians.⁶⁷ The theme of Hellenic unity against Persia was prominent also in Lysias' *Olympiakos* (33), a speech delivered in Olympia in the 380s BCE and Isocrates' *Panegyrikos*, a work written in the style of Olympic orations, and hence presenting an argument purportedly suitable for presentation at the Olympic festival, and published around 380 BCE. Both the *Olympiakos* and the *Panegyrikos* demonstrate that, on the rhetorical level at least, panhellenism was entangled in a nexus of interstate conflicts and ideological manipulations. Speakers themselves were not immune of partisanship: note, for instance, Lysias' call to audiences at Olympia to tear down, while the Olympic festival was ongoing, the flamboyant tent of the envoys of Dionysius of Syracuse.⁶⁸ A similar incident is recorded in late sources regarding Themistocles and the tyrant Hiero of Syracuse. The Athenian statesman allegedly prompted the crowd at the 476 BCE Olympic games to tear part of the tent of Hiero's delegation and prevent his horses from competing – Hiero went on to win the chariot-race on that occasion.⁶⁹ The story has been suspected as a fabrication but Lysias' Olympic speech demonstrates that partisan and inflammatory rhetoric was not foreign in Olympia.⁷⁰ Even though such rhetorical fireworks undoubtedly touched many of the visitors in the Olympic and other festivals, for the more levelheaded observer the constant and widespread entanglement of Persia in the Greek affairs during the fourth century BCE must have made the calls for panhellenic unity, evinced in pamphlets or delivered at the sites of the major games, sound increasingly utopian.

The expansion of the Greek-speaking world during the Hellenistic period created new political realities and affiliations that shifted the content of debates on

Hellenicity and the role of the Olympic and other major games in shaping and negotiating identities. I have already referred to the final of men's boxing at the Olympic games of 212 BCE as related by Polybius.⁷¹ The bout featured Kleitomachos of Thebes, boxing Olympic champion of 216 BCE and admittedly one of the most notable athletes of his day versus the relatively unknown Aristonikos from Egypt. The spectators initially cheered the underdog Aristonikos but at some point during the match they were confronted by Kleitomachos. The key argument used by Kleitomachos in his exchange with the spectators centered on a restrictive notion of Hellenicity that excluded all Greek speakers or self-defined Greeks in the Hellenistic multicultural empires of the eastern Mediterranean. Kleitomachos presented and probably perceived himself, according to Polybius, as fighting for the honor of Greece (ὕπὲρ τῆς τῶν Ἑλλήνων δόξης) while his opponent was fighting for the honor of king Ptolemy. It was this argument that led to the audience – most of whom, we can safely assume, came from cities of the Greek mainland – experiencing a reversion of feeling (τὴν μετὰπτωσιν τῶν πολλῶν) and shifting their support to Kleitomachos who went on to win his second Olympic crown. To be sure the Alexandrian Aristonikos, similarly to Alexander I in the early fifth century BCE, had been deemed as Greek by the Olympic *hellenodikai* and was therefore allowed to compete. Polybius underscores how the audience perceived and adjusted this cornerstone of the regulatory framework of the Olympic games, i.e. eligibility in accordance with Greek ethnic origin, to renegotiate the notion of Hellenicity. In the late-third century BCE world of multicultural empires, Greekness was a contestable and negotiable concept and for the audience in Olympia a citizen of the multi-cultural Ptolemaic kingdom had a less solid claim to Greekness than an athlete from the ancient, even for early Hellenistic standards, city of Thebes.

A recently discovered set of epigrams by Posidippos of Pella, a poet active in the Ptolemaic court in the second half of the third century BCE, further illuminates the shifting and malleable perceptions of Hellenicity and the central role of sport in articulating it. Posidippos and other contemporary evidence reveal the scale of the expansion of Greek sport culture in early Hellenistic Egypt, reflected in new agonistic festivals, establishment of athletic venues and training programs as well as the funding of promising young athletes of limited financial means.⁷² Moreover, there was clearly in place a policy of systematic and successful participation in panhellenic games by Ptolemaic royals and courtiers. Despite the biases that audiences in the Olympic and other games in the Greek mainland might have harbored, the Ptolemaic court promoted an image of Hellenicity and imperial power in the Greek-speaking world through the skillful exploitation of the opportunities that Greek sport afforded. It is also worth noting, in connection with contested notions of Hellenicity, that through an amendment of the regulatory framework the Romans themselves were given permission to compete at the Isthmian games since 228 BCE, a development that in practical terms was tantamount to a declaration of Greekness.⁷³ In such an environment of multiculturalism and rapid change it is easy to imagine the

frustrations and concerns that many must have felt regarding the content and meaning of Hellenic identity.

6 Civic agonistic festivals, identity and community

The establishment and expansion of the network of new agonistic festivals in the eastern Mediterranean during the Hellenistic period was a hallmark of the post-Classical era that mostly accounted for the elevation of sport as a primary means in articulating status, group and civic identities. Civic authorities systematically attempted to establish a wide network of recognition of the inviolability of sanctuaries and festivals, as well as the panhellenic status of the games hosted in these festivals. Such attempts to promote interstate festivals usually occurred, with varying success, in the immediate aftermath of their establishment or during their formal overhaul that aimed at upgrading their status in the eyes of the outside world.⁷⁴

By focusing on a case study – Kolophon and its major agonistic festival, the Great Klaria – in the present section I will explore facets of the development of communal (civic and regional) identities through sport. I will discuss individual and corporate, i.e. mostly subgroups of the citizenry, identities through agonistic festivals in Chapters 4 and 6.

The Great Klaria was among the numerous new agonistic festivals established during the Hellenistic period. The establishment of agonistic festivals was, to be sure, nothing new in itself, as festivals with games were also being established in rising numbers during the Classical period as well.⁷⁵ One qualitative difference regarding the newly-minted agonistic festivals of the Hellenistic period was their intended appeal. Starting in the third century BCE organizing authorities of local games, especially in Asia Minor, Egypt and the Aegean Islands, expended considerable effort and resources in endeavoring to entrench a panhellenic reputation for their festivals, often by seeking to have their games recognized as “equal” to a major contest of mainland Greece. The most well-documented exponent of this trend is the festival and games in honor of Artemis Leukophrene in Magnesia on the Meander in 208 BCE. In this case the Magnesians, following an oracle of Apollo and an epiphany of Artemis, literally inundated the Hellenistic world with delegations requesting the recognition of the inviolability of the sanctuary and the upgrade of the games to penteteric (quadrennial) and *isopythios* (equal to the Pythian games). They received at least 160 positive responses, although the actual number might have been close to 200. Notable is the geographical scope of the cities visited by the Magnesian embassies, from Syracuse in Sicily to Antiocheia Persis in the Persian Gulf. Following this barrage of festival diplomacy the Magnesians created an impressive civic monument by inscribing these civic decrees and royal letters on the perimeter wall of their *agora*.⁷⁶

The Magnesians pursued the task of promoting the new festival of Artemis Leukophrene with remarkable enthusiasm and meticulousness, yet the enterprise was hardly unique. Several other cities of the old and new Greek-speaking world, including Kos, Stratonikeia and Alexandria in Egypt, embarked on

similar campaigns with the objective of elevating their local games in the established hierarchy of Greek athletic competitions. The objective of these and other cities was to enhance the catchment area of their games and festivals and as a result put them on the map of an already existing network of interconnected festivals. Official delegations, athletes and visitors to the games were critical agents in forging links of reciprocal relations with communities and rulers. Simply put, Magnesia, and all other cities whose games aimed at panhellenic “sacred crown” status, aimed at making their local festival the focal point of ritual activity in the Greek world for a number of days every few years. Once the recognition and participation of a respectable number of cities and athletes was secured, host cities were eager to reaffirm and spread in all corners of the Greek world, through the successful holding of the games, a template of piousness, civic order and other modes of self-representation that the host city wished to project. Moreover, proclamations, honor awards and other performances in interstate civic festivals further promoted interstate links. Honors were also frequently bestowed by decrees of the people and were supplementary to the festival-recognition interstate diplomacy. In one case, the people of the city of Laodikeia at Lykos decreed to award golden crowns on an annual basis during the local games in Laodikeia to the delegates of the city of Magnesia sent on the mission to have their Leukophryneia games recognized as crown and *isopythian*. In other words, by rewarding during the games in Laodikeia representatives for their work in promoting the games in Magnesia, the city of Laodikeia not only encouraged polity interaction but also shored up the expanding interstate network of agonistic festivals of the Hellenistic world.

Athletes appeared happy to partake in such civic festival performances in big numbers. For the athletes of international caliber, newly established festivals that claimed “sacred crown” status never acquired the prestige of the old “Big Four” games of mainland Greece or the games of the enhanced *periodos* in Imperial times. Nevertheless, if conditions, especially the timing of the games and value of prizes offered, were optimal top athletes were willing to travel and compete beyond the confines of the traditional epicenter of Greek sport. Competition in such local games of panhellenic pretensions were a great way to raise additional revenue for the athletes’ training and travels.⁷⁷ Moreover, as it is the case with modern athletes, frequent competition in conjunction with methodical training was crucial in order to keep in top form, with the ultimate goal being to peak at the most prestigious games of the season (Olympic, Pythian or other).

It was in such a context that Kolophonians undertook the challenging task of establishing and promoting the Apollo Great Klaria festival and games. Kolophon was an old Greek city whose fate was closely intertwined with the sanctuary of Apollo in Klaros. Being an oracle sanctuary, Klaros became a prominent regional cultic center with an enhanced reputation throughout the Greek-speaking world. The sanctuary at Klaros was also the stage of the Great Klaria festival, the most notable agonistic festival organized by Kolophon. The monument and honorary inscription for Polemaios dedicated on a prime spot in

the sanctuary in Klaros underscores the centrality of the Great Klaria in the cultic and ceremonial life of the sanctuary and the city of Kolophon.⁷⁸ In addition to other aspects of Polemaios' life, discussed in more detail in Chapter 5, the decree focuses on the honoree's acts of civic service as well as his euergetism. Among the latter, the monument underscores his *agonothesia* in the Great Klaria games. As it was customary in eulogistic discourses for *agonothetai* Polemaios was praised for his generosity and inclusiveness towards both Kolophonians and visitors.⁷⁹ This attitude, which undoubtedly reflected wider attempts to establish the Great Klaria as a festival of interstate renown, was articulated in the assertion that Polemaios invited all mankind ("πάντας ἀνθρώπους") to the games and sacrifices of the Great Klaria.⁸⁰ The honorary decree for Menippos, another prominent Kolophonian and contemporary of Polemaios, also underscores the optimal catchment area of the Great Klaria. In his capacity as *agonothetes* of the festival Menippos, we are told, presided over the games that were appealing to both "Greeks and barbarians."⁸¹

A recently published decree issued by the league of the Ionians further illuminates the history and vicissitudes of the Great Klaria festival during the Hellenistic period.⁸² The decree dates to the early second century BCE, i.e. several decades before the *agonothesai* of Polemaios and Menippos in the Great Klaria. The Ionian league, which comprised major cities in Asia Minor and the eastern Aegean including Kolophon, justified issuing the decree on the grounds of the ties of kinship (*syngeneis*), a common rhetorical strategy in Hellenistic diplomacy, that tied the Kolophonians and the other member states of the league. According to this document, due to war the Great Klaria festival and games had lapsed in the years preceding the promulgation of the decree. Then, in an instance of divine epiphany, Apollo appeared at the Klaros sanctuary and specifically requested the reinstatement of the festival and games. Following this development the Kolophonians set the wheels in motion and duly re-established the games. As a result, the Ionian league decided to send a delegation (*theoria*) every time the Great Klaria were celebrated. The last fragmentary part of the decree outlines the specific duties of the Ionian delegates at the Great Klaria festival.

Hence in the early second century BCE the Kolophonians had found themselves in a challenging but hardly unique situation. The smooth operation of local agonistic festivals and athletic training facilities was oftentimes interrupted because of war or lack of funding. Usually civic authorities strove to restore normal operations at the earliest opportunity. In fact, establishing a vibrant athletic life was often presented as a prerequisite and a priority – see for instance the letter by Eumenes II, issued shortly after the peace of Apamea in 188 BCE, granting Tyriaion the status of the city through a polis-constitution (*politeia*), permission to use their own laws and the right to build a *gymnasion*.⁸³ A follow-up letter by Eumenes II, inscribed on the same stone, stipulated the short and long-term plans for the provision of oil in the new city's *gymnasion*.

What then motivated civic authorities, kings, leagues and other dignitaries or institutional power-holders to prioritize agonistic festivals and gymnasial life, even in the face of swiftly shifting fortunes brought about by internecine warfare and other powers struggles endemic in the second century BCE? The immense popularity and indisputable cultural power exerted by sport in the Greek world is, to be sure, the foundation and starting point of any analysis. When we delve deeper, we can detect a tapestry of intertwined factors that drove forward the expansion of sport in the Hellenistic and Imperial periods. From the community's perspective, agonistic festivals were crucial in negotiating and brokering civic values and social order. Agonistic festivals were also a stage for playing out interrelationships and conflicts between distinct groups that were usually demarcated along age, gender or legal status lines.⁸⁴ Moreover, such festivals were prominent occasions of leisure and communal recreation, features that largely account for their continuous popularity.

Securing funding for the establishment and uninterrupted operation of festivals was therefore indispensable, as the Polemaios inscription also indicates. Whenever cities or larger entities (e.g. leagues) financed their festivals, funds were carefully allocated and closely monitored. The goal, as a third century BCE decree from Aigosthena puts it, was to make the games even more spectacular.⁸⁵ But often civic elites gradually and voluntarily undertook the financial burden necessary for the smooth operation of *gymnasia* and the conduct of festivals and games, often as expedient means to claim a bigger share of cultural and political capital. Polemaios and Menippos were, as I have already pointed out, salient exponents of this trend in the case of the Great Klaria. Through this process, private sponsors frequently supplanted civic or other corporate entities (e.g. leagues) as the main sources of financial and often logistical support for agonistic festivals. This was done irrespective of underlying financial needs by civic authorities: acts of benefaction were eagerly undertaken because they mediated social tensions and provided a template of legitimation.⁸⁶ Besides underwriting the expenses of agonistic festivals and *gymnasia*, benefactors and sponsors of games often had sufficient leeway to negotiate aspects of the regulatory framework of the contests and venues they financed, e.g. regarding events, age-groups and even technical rules.

Overall, agonistic benefaction created a multifaceted and autopoietic cluster of symbolic obligations and counter-obligations, the performance of which facilitated the circulation of cultural capital and the embodiment of diverse public personae by civic elites. Perhaps the main impetus behind all this was the potential for recognition and privileges that could accrue to cities and especially individuals who contributed to a festival. Sponsoring agonistic festivals and other forms of sport-related munificence therefore evolved into one of the main arenas of conspicuous consumption by local elites. As the well-to-do competed with each other in their spending for games and athletic

facilities, they expected in return a manifestation of gratitude by their fellow citizens. Much of the public recognition for elites who had rendered services to the athletic life of the city occurred during festivals, often in the same festival that the benefactor had sponsored in the past. Again, Polemaios is a good example: the city of Kolophon decreed the usual high honors (golden crown, gilded bronze statue) for Polemaios' Great Klaria *agonothesia* and other services, and the honors were formally announced at the Dionysia and Great Klaria games. Moreover, a proclamation pertaining to Polemaios' civic honors was perpetually made during the athletic contests and pyrrhic dance performances in Kolophon.⁸⁷ Menippos was also voted similar honors for his various services. In Menippos' case as well the Great Klaria were singled out as the stage of the ceremonial bestowal of these honors.⁸⁸ The presence in the festival of delegates and athletes from many Ionian and other Greek cities was certainly perceived as magnifying the effect of such honorific ceremonials. For the host cities, therefore, festivals of regional or panhellenic magnitude provided excellent opportunities to play out the politics of honor that increasingly gained traction among leagues, cities and their elites during the Hellenistic period.

There is an additional point that prominently emerges from the decree of the Ionian league on the Great Klaria, namely the role of agonistic festivals in forging and negotiating civic and regional relationships and identities. As always, one has to bear in mind the wider picture: the politics of the Hellenistic world was dominated by supra-civic entities such as leagues and multi-ethnic kingdoms that at times comprised within their territory thousands of communities, old or recently founded. As competition between these entities was fierce, borders shifted and rulers changed at a fast pace. Kolophon for instance, was incorporated within the span of 63 years, from 281 to 218 BCE, to the Seleucid then to the Ptolemaic and then the Attalid kingdoms, only to come under Seleucid rule again in the late third century BCE, shortly before the decree of the Ionian league was issued.⁸⁹ Individual cities acknowledged and adapted to the imperial rule of Hellenistic kingdoms, and sport and festival was a crucial strategy for getting on the rulers' good side.

But at the intra-civic level, cities continued to engage with each other on a basis of peer-polity interaction and reciprocity. Agonistic festivals were conduits that facilitated these networks of communication that allowed individual cities and larger entities, including regional leagues, to put themselves on the map and pursue expedient relationships or alliances. For Kolophon, the Great Klaria was clearly the stage that made the city, and the sanctuary of Apollo in Klaros, the focal point of the cultic and athletic calendar in Ionia for the duration of the festival. It was therefore expedient that, following its temporary lapse, the festival would be expeditiously reinstated. The formal restoration of the festival was a pressing matter for the Ionian league as well, as the decree discussed above suggests. That was because major festivals were crucial also for the negotiation of identities and the forging of interstate relationships at the regional level – this is an

aspect of agonistic and ceremonial life that has not been adequately addressed in scholarship on Greek sport and festivals. In addition to civic festivals recognized and promoted by leagues, as in the case of the Ionian league and the Great Klaria, there were also formal “league” festivals, i.e. festivals conducted under the aegis and at times through the sponsorship of a league, that emphasized common ties of kinship, invoked also in the decree of the Ionians for the Great Klaria. Thus in Oinoanda during the Imperial period the Euaresteia and Demostheneia games were open to Lykians, as victory monuments and other evidence emphasize, i.e. only citizens of the member states of the Lykian league were eligible to compete in these games.⁹⁰ In the case of Xanthos, the Romaia games were organized and possibly sponsored also by the Lykian league (“τεθέντι ὑπὸ τοῦ κοινοῦ τῶν Λυκίων”).⁹¹ Eligibility for competition in this agonistic festival that sported an extensive program of athletic and cultural contests was originally restricted to athletes and performers from member states of the Lykian league. However, by the late second or early first century BCE the Xanthos Romaia games were accessible to athletes from the entire Greek-speaking world, although the festival ostensibly attracted, as a victors’ list from a single iteration of the festival suggests, mainly athletes and performers from Lykian cities.

Furthermore, corporate subdivisions of the citizenry often picked the most prominent festivals to articulate their collective identity and negotiate their status. In the late third century BCE in Kolophon, for instance, 153 youths belonging to the age-groups of *ephebes* and *neoi* petitioned the city council to grant a crown and erect a statue for the gymnasiarch Euelthon. Moreover, the youths requested that a proclamation to the effect that Euelthon has been crowned by the city should be made at the Dionysia and the Great Klaria festivals.⁹² Civic authorities usually approved such requests, as it was clearly the case with the one regarding Euelthon in Kolophon. In addition to proclamations and crown awards, numerous other eulogistic acts could be performed in the context of civic festivals. For instance, according to an honorary decree issued by Mylasa a certain Olympichos was honored with a proclamation at the games, probably in honor of Zeus Osogo, for his crowning by the city as well as with the recitation of custom-composed hymns at the quadrennial Taureia.⁹³

7 Conclusion

Dedicated, passionate and informed, spectators were an integral part of Greek athletic culture from the early Archaic period. Even though some literary authors comment on their mercurial attitude during contests, the epigraphic corpus suggests a complementary aspect of spectator behavior, namely their active demonstration of support or disapproval directed towards athletes and officials. Such behavior, as honorary inscriptions for athletes sometimes intimate, often swung the pendulum of a contest. Spectators, to be sure, came to Olympia and the sites of other games with their own values, beliefs and biases,

which often coincided but at times contrasted with the narratives generated by organizing authorities and some athletes. On the occasion of the participation of Alexander I of Macedonia in the Olympic games, for instance, it is certain that some of the spectators would have sided with the view of the athletes who objected on Alexander's participation on the grounds of his questionable Hellenic origin credentials. By the same token, some must have been more sympathetic to Alexander and the board of the Olympic *hellenodikai* who gave him permission to compete. At any event, the sources on this incident do not reveal anything regarding spectator attitudes, or perceptions beyond Olympia, on what must have been a well-known and controversial theme. But thanks to Polybius, we receive confirmation that Olympia continued to be a hotbed for the negotiation of Hellenicity in the post-Classical world. The narrative of the men's boxing final between Kleitomachos and Aristonikos also demonstrates the active engagement of spectators in this high-stakes game of ethnic and civic identity.

To be sure, all these spectator attitudes and practices were hedged by the detailed regulatory framework governing the operation of Greek sport. While some aspects of this framework will be discussed in the ensuing chapters, in the current chapter I overviewed the role of sport officials/umpires, as well as aspects of the legal framework governing the operation of sport on the civic level. Archaic and Classical Athens is a well-documented case of material rewards and other privileges bestowed to athletes successful at the highest level of competitive sport. Such emoluments and accolades were legally endorsed and implemented, thus adding another layer of signification and negotiation to the value and role of sport in this major Greek city. In addition to regulating such matters Greek cities, or affluent benefactors, also oversaw the drafting and implementation of the legal framework governing the operation of civic festivals. Even though there was considerable overlap in the program, events, age-groups and rules espoused by local games, there was also considerable diversity as dictated by local conditions.

Hence in this chapter I introduced the distinction between technical rules for athletic events and cultural regulations pertaining to the management of athletic sites and games, a theme that runs through the following chapter as well. The near-universality of technical rules was a *sine qua non* for the spread of Greek sport far and wide and the emergence of an elaborate network of festivals and games, especially during the Hellenistic and Imperial periods. But it was the vast array of cultural regulations, which often differed considerably from one city to the next, that are revealing of the socially constitutive and transformative powers of Greek sport. These regulations were ideologically malleable but at times also chronically enduring, and were frequently aimed at entrenching and reinforcing existing status boundaries. Hellenistic Kolophon and its iconic Great Klaria was an example of a civic entity and its festival that navigated the complex array of regulation, custom and protocol related to sport and interstate relations to establish and reinforce a festival that put the city on the map of Greek athletics in a period of political and military instability. Similar

objectives could also be achieved through the regulation and operation of local athletic facilities, most importantly the *gymnasion*, a theme that is expounded in detail in the ensuing chapter.

Notes

- 1 Dyck and Archetti 2003, 10.
- 2 Epict. *Gnom.* 1.6.26–27; Dio Chrys. 8.6–11.
- 3 Gounaropoulou and Hatzopoulos 1998, no. 398.
- 4 *Ach.* 214; *Vesp.* 1206.
- 5 Dedication in the Acropolis, Raubitschek 1949, no. 76; Moretti 1953, no. 11 and Romano 1998; in the battle of Salamis, Hdt. 8.47. Phayllos also dedicated a statue in Delphi, Paus. 10.9.2. For further testimonia see Golden 2004, 131–132.
- 6 Idomeneus from Crete and Ajax son of Oileus from Lokris, Hom. *Il.* 23, 450–489.
- 7 Lazaridou 2015, ll. 127–128.
- 8 Polyb. 27.9.3–13, which includes Polybius' comments on Greek spectators' mercurial behavior. For additional discussion see Chapter 1.
- 9 *lvO* 54.
- 10 *lvO* 54, 37–38. For “sacred” victories and Tiberius Claudius Rufus see also Chapter 4.1.
- 11 *lvO* 54, 27–30.
- 12 AB 74.
- 13 Adak, Tüner Önen and Şahin 2005, 8 no. 5 (= *SEG* 55.1473).
- 14 For a discussion see Papakonstantinou 2015a.
- 15 *VH* 2.6.
- 16 Dio Chrys. 32.41–42.
- 17 For the description of Alexandrian sport spectators' behavior in Dio see Barry 1993.
- 18 For examples of parasocial interaction between fans and athletes in the ancient world see e.g. Pind. *Pyth.* 10, 58–60 where the victor is presented as admired by young men and the elders and as an object of erotic desire for girls of his city; similarly, a first century CE gladiator in Pompeii was a favorite among female fans, *ILS* 5142 a-e = *CIL* IV.4356 = Hunink 2011, no. 338. For parasocial interaction between fans and athletes or other celebrities see Horton and Wohl 1956; Earnhardt and Haridakis 2009; Frederick et al. 2012; Rojek 2016.
- 19 For sport and spectacle spectatorship in the Roman context see Fagan 2011.
- 20 This point is further elaborated in Chapter 6.1c.
- 21 Wörrle 1988, p. 10, ll. 63–65 = *SEG* 38.1462.
- 22 IK *Perge* 47; cf IK *Perge* 48; Hall and Milner 1994, no. 23. For more examples of order-enforcing groups in festivals see Robert 1979, 160–162. For festivals as stages of civic unrest see van Nijf 2012, 67–70.
- 23 *lvO* 56, 51.
- 24 Dio Chrys. 32.4.
- 25 Dio Chrys. 32.5; 30–32; 41–43; 45–46; 50–51; 69; 89.
- 26 IK *Knidos* I 71, end first/beginning second century CE. For more examples of disrupted funerals see Jones 1999.
- 27 The regulatory framework of Greek athletics was part and parcel of the wider trends towards institutionalization and bureaucratization of sport. For the latter see Hubbard 2008, 382, in response to Allen Guttmann's (1978) claim that bureaucratization in sport was fundamentally a modern phenomenon.
- 28 Paus. 5.21.5. For this episode see Weiler 1991b.
- 29 On the ability of sport to create and challenge social boundaries see Dyck 2000b, 31–33.
- 30 Kyle 2015, 114.

- 31 Gagarin 1986, 19–50.
- 32 Gagarin 2008, Papakonstantinou 2008.
- 33 Hölkeskamp 1999.
- 34 For a wider perspective analysis of these developments see Morris 2000.
- 35 Plut. *Sol.* 23.3 = Leão and Rhodes 2015 Fr. 89/1a; Diog. Laert. 1.55 = Leão and Rhodes 2015 Fr. 89/1b. On the critical view, allegedly espoused by Solon, on athletes and athletics see Diod. Sic. 9.2.5 = Leão and Rhodes 2015 Fr. 89/1c, and Diog. Laert. 1.55–56.
- 36 Kyle 1984b, 95.
- 37 Mann 2001, 68–81.
- 38 Tyrnt. fr. 12 West; Xenoph. fr. 2 West. For a discussion see Papakonstantinou 2014b.
- 39 *IG I³*.131.
- 40 For Athenian views on equestrian sport see Golden 1997; Papakonstantinou 2003; and discussion in previous chapter.
- 41 Morrissey 1978, 123–124. Morrissey connects the need for statutory clarification to the discontent regarding equestrian victories detected in contemporary Athenian literature.
- 42 See Schmalz 2006 for a recent discussion, with references to relevant testimonia and past scholarship, of the function of the Classical Athenian *prytaneion* and its possible location.
- 43 Gagarin 2008, 23–26; Papakonstantinou 2008, 29–31.
- 44 For the major changes in Greek athletics during the Archaic period, especially the sixth century BCE, see Kyle 2015, 70–90; Christesen 2007b.
- 45 Glass 1988; Mann 1998.
- 46 The regulatory frameworks and programs of the Pythian games and other top-tier games are also relatively well-known. Some had an impact on the organization of local games as well. For the officials and regulatory framework of the Pythian games throughout antiquity see Weir 2004.
- 47 Crowther 2004, 53–64; Romano 2007.
- 48 *Hellaniotikāi* in inscriptions of the fifth century BCE: Minon 2007, 532–535.
- 49 Training month in Elis: Crowther 2004, 65–70.
- 50 Assessment of athletes: Philostr. *Gym.* 25; Hdt. 5.22.
- 51 Wreaths: Pind. *Ol.* 3, 12–13.
- 52 Hdt. 5.22.2: οὐ βαρβάρων ἀγωνιστέων εἶναι τὸν ἀγῶνα ἀλλὰ Ἑλλήνων.
- 53 Doubts, Kyle 2010, 39; fabrication, Borza 1990, 112.
- 54 Pind. frs. 120–121 Maehler; Bacchyl. fr. 3 Irigoin.
- 55 Kertész 2005; Nielsen 2007, 18–21; Kyle 2010, 39, opts for 480 or 476 BCE.
- 56 Alexander I ascended to the throne of Macedonia c. 498 BCE, so he was probably in his mid-thirties or even older in 476 BCE.
- 57 See also Hammond and Griffith 1979, 60. Just. *Epit.* 7.2.14 claims that Alexander I competed in the *pentathlon* in the Olympic games.
- 58 Xen. *Hell.* 4.1.39–40.
- 59 See also Plut. *Ages.* 13.1–4, who draws primarily from Xenophon. For the episode see Bresson 2002.
- 60 In addition to family links (see discussion in Chapter 2), in late sixth and early fifth-century epinicians and honorary monuments victors often emphasize, and thus to a large extent identify, with their place of origin; see references in Chapter 2, note 31.
- 61 Golden 1998, 4–5; Nielsen 2007, 12–16.
- 62 The Persian wars as a turning point for the development of a heightened feeling of Greekness at the panhellenic games, and especially the Olympics: Siewert 2005; Nielsen 2007, 20.
- 63 For eligibility to compete in the Olympic games see Weiler 2008. For participation at the Olympic games during the Archaic period as an exclusive right of Greeks see

- Nielsen 2007, 20–21. For the role of sanctuaries in negotiating relations between Greeks and non-Greeks see Vlassopoulos 2013, 325–326.
- 64 Pind. *Ol.* 3, 12; Paus. 5.9.4–6; Siewert 1992 and 2005; Romano 2007, 96–99.
- 65 Hdt. 9.81.1.
- 66 For the politics of dedication and commemoration in Olympia and Delphi see Scott 2010, with Eckerman's 2008 and 2010 comments regarding panhellenism in the Classical period.
- 67 Gorg. fr. 7–8 Diels-Kranz; Philostr. *VS* 1.9.2.
- 68 The call was included in a non-extant part of Lysias Olympic oration. See D.H. *Lys.* 29; Diod. Sic. 14.109.
- 69 Plut. *Them.* 25.1; Ael. *VH* 9.5 and 13.43.
- 70 Themistocles against Hiero in Olympia a fabrication, Potter 2012, 48. But see Kyle 2015, 128.
- 71 See note 8 of the present chapter.
- 72 See e.g. Koenen 1977 = *SEG* 27.1114 (Vasileia); *IG* XII.7.506 (Ptolemaia). See also Remijsen 2010 for a discussion of Posidippos' epigrams, the victories of Ptolemaic royals in panhellenic games and other evidence for sport in Egypt during the Hellenistic period.
- 73 Polyb. 2.12.8.
- 74 For the practice of seeking *asylia* for a sanctuary see Rigsby 1996. Cf. also the discussion of the wider implications for the standing of a city vis-à-vis the rest of the Greek world in Ma 2003.
- 75 See more recently Nielsen 2018.
- 76 Rigsby 1996, nos. 66–131. For the festival of Artemis Leukophrene in Magnesia and the process of establishing festivals of translocal appeal see Slater and Summa 2006; van Nijf and Williamson 2015.
- 77 Such funding came in the form of prizes won at games or cash awards from the athlete's home city. For an example of the latter see e.g. *SEG* 1.436, Miletus, 205/4 BCE.
- 78 Robert and Robert 1989, 11–17 = *SEG* 39.1243, ca. 130–110 BCE.
- 79 *SEG* 39.1243.IV, 30–54.
- 80 *SEG* 39.1243.IV, 50–54. The invitation to all mankind possibly alludes to the attempt of the *agonothetes* to attract as many athletes and visitors from as many Greek cities as possible, but also to the widely popular character of the festival that, as it became the norm during the Hellenistic and Imperial periods, organically integrated in its activities subaltern groups that normally would have had few opportunities to partake in public life. For the latter point see Chapter 6.
- 81 For the monument and inscription honoring Menippos, erected after 120/119 BCE, see Robert and Robert 1989, 63–66 = *SEG* 39.1244. Games appealing to Greeks and barbarians, *SEG* 39.1244.II, 29–33.
- 82 Müller and Prost 2013.
- 83 Jonnes and Riel 1997 = *SEG* 47.1745.
- 84 For these features of agonistic festivals see Chapter 6.
- 85 *IG* VII.43.
- 86 Zuiderhoek 2009; Papakonstantinou 2016b.
- 87 For Polemaios' civic honors in the Great Claria and other contexts see *SEG* 39.1243.V.
- 88 *SEG* 39.1244.III.
- 89 Müller and Prost 2013, 102–103. For a broader narrative see Ma 1999.
- 90 Demostheneia: Wörrle 1988 with commentary 189–190; Euaresteia: Hall and Milner 1994.
- 91 See Robert 1978 for text and discussion.
- 92 Gauthier 2005. Cf. the case of a delegation of the *neoi* and athletes during the celebration of the Great Panathenaia, the festival of the *koinon* of Athena Ilias,

- requesting honors for a certain Antikles from Lampsakos, Özhan and Tombul 2003, 7–10 and Pilot 2016, the latter for the *koinon* of Athena Ilias and the Great Panathenaia at Ilion. For the *neoi* as a group, especially in epigraphic discourse, see Kennell 2013; for youth age-groups in Ptolemaic and Imperial Egypt see Legras 1999.
- 93 Isager and Karlsson 2008, second half of third century BCE.

Rules, eligibility and participation

I would like now to turn my attention to a set of regulations with a more narrow thematic scope but with virtually universal acceptance, namely technical rules for athletic events. Prescriptions pertaining to the logistical aspects of the operation of agonistic festivals, especially of the major ones (*periodos*), also largely fall within the category of narrow-focus regulations that won wider acceptance: such regulatory frameworks were often established with a specific festival in mind, but eventually many of their features were widely adopted by agonistic festivals throughout the Greek-speaking world. Moreover, regulatory frameworks of games often changed, and these changes are intermittingly documented in our record. Quite frequently such changes intersected with fundamental principles of Greek athletics, e.g. dominant views of athletic victory and defeat. Following a discussion of these themes, in the remainder of the chapter I will return to the local level and the multivocality of cultural norms and prescriptions on sport through an examination of instances of eligibility and participation in local *themides* and the activities of *gymnasia* during the Hellenistic and Imperial periods.

I Technical rules: the Olympic games and beyond

Technical rules pertaining to specific Olympic events were committed to writing since at least the late Archaic period. The act of writing down these rules, combined with the growing prestige of the Olympic games, must have contributed to the consolidation of a more or less fixed set of technical rules for each event that gained widespread authority until late antiquity. These sets of technical rules essentially amounted to universally adopted rulebooks, a process that greatly facilitated the development of an international circuit of athletic contests frequented by local and itinerant athletes.

The earliest extant technical rules were inscribed on a bronze tablet of the last quarter of the sixth century BCE.¹ A clause prescribed that a wrestler could not break his opponent's fingers and outlined the penalties to be imposed to transgressors. Moreover, the law quite likely laid out the conditions for readmission of an offender to a future Olympic festival. The interpretation of the last four lines of the fragmentary inscription is quite uncertain but the language

suggests provisions against corruption and clauses regarding compensation through the payment of monetary sums. The tablet, in other words, was rather a collection of both technical, i.e. germane to a particular event, rules as well as more generic clauses regarding the operation of the Olympic festival. By analogy to other late archaic laws,² it is quite likely that some of the fragmentary provisions concerned negligent officials (*thearoi*, l. 8; perhaps also judges) and stipulated the sanctions to be inflicted in cases of duty infringement.

It is very likely that the late sixth-century BCE tablet as well as other documents of legal character pertaining to the Olympic festival were publicly displayed in the sanctuary. Hence during his visit to Olympia Pausanias claimed to have seen the “disposition of the games.”³ Thucydides also refers to the “Olympic law.”⁴ These references should not be understood as referring to a comprehensive code of Olympic rules, but most likely to a series of written bronze tablets or stone inscriptions that contained provisions on an array of issues, such as e.g. the rules on wrestling previously discussed, prescriptions that regulated the attendance of women in the games or the regulations for the Olympic *ekecheiria*.⁵

The Olympic truce (*ekecheiria*) is a good example of the panhellenic appeal and legally binding nature of some, if not all, of Olympic rules. During the late Archaic and Classical periods the Olympic *ekecheiria* consisted of a status of sanctity for the sanctuary of Zeus in Olympia as well as the inviolability of the territory of Elis for the duration of the truce. Moreover, it provided for immunity and safe passage from all territories for Olympic delegations, prospective athletes and their companions as well as spectators.⁶ As the dispute between Elis and Sparta in 420 BCE suggests, clauses prescribed the exact procedure and timetable for the official start of the *ekecheiria* as well as the penalties to be imposed on its violators.⁷ This level of detail can only mean that a written statute on the Olympic *ekecheiria* existed at least by 420 BCE, and possibly much earlier.

It is not known what institutional body drafted and enacted the written laws germane to Olympic matters. It is possible that the *nomophylakes*, officials who instructed the *hellanodikai*-elect and the Olympic council were involved.⁸ Law-making was an ongoing, reflexive and dynamic process and we must assume that laws regulating aspects of the Olympic festival were often revised. Moreover, new laws that supplemented the existing legal framework were promulgated until the demise of the festival in late antiquity.⁹ At any event, athletes and other persons of interest (e.g. trainers, officials) would have been thoroughly familiar with the specific rules governing the operation of the sanctuary, the technical rules for particular sport events as well as the penalties stipulated in the relevant statutes. Regarding spectators and visitors to the sanctuaries/games, organizers publicized the content of key regulations to all interested parties. In Delphi, an inscribed stone containing a regulation against wine-drinking in the stadium was inserted in the retaining wall of the venue, not far from its main entrance.¹⁰ Furthermore, athletes and officials often swore legally binding oaths. In Olympia, for instance, in addition to the individual statutes the Olympic oath provided an additional layer of deterrence for potentially corrupt athletes, trainers and judges.¹¹ Pausanias

provides a summary of the procedure and content of the oath.¹² It was sworn in the *bouleuterion* in Olympia in front of the statue of Zeus Hor-kios. The athletes as well as their fathers, brothers and trainers swore that “in nothing will they commit any offence against the Olympic games.”¹³ Athletes in the men’s age-group also swore that they had trained for ten months. Moreover, Pausanias refers to the oath of the *hellanodikai* in connection with their review of athletes and horses and their allocation to age-categories. The *hellanodikai* also swore to decide fairly and without bribes as well as not to disclose information about competitors.

All the written regulations and oath-taking did not deter rogue athletes from cheating in the ancient Olympics.¹⁴ Again, this inference is in keeping with what we know about the reception of law and legal procedures in general in the Greek world. If Pausanias is to be believed, a few decades after the promulgation of the late sixth-century BCE written statute, which prohibited finger-breaking in wrestling, Leontiskos of Messene won two Olympic wrestling victories by breaking his opponents’ fingers.¹⁵ This can be accounted for either as a result of the modification of the sixth-century law or, more likely, as a case of ingenious foul play that went undetected by the judges. Moreover perjury, which is assumed in any violation of Olympic laws, was in the Greek world a common occurrence since the Archaic period.¹⁶ In Olympia the Zanes, the statues paid for by offending athletes, stood near the entrance of the Olympic stadium since 388 BCE and were a palpable reminder of the punishments and the ignominy incurred by Olympic rule-breakers.¹⁷ Besides the erection of the Zanes statues, fines, flogging and expulsion from the games were in some cases meted out to violators of the Olympic rules.¹⁸

As the account of the oath-taking ceremony in Pausanias and possibly the law containing wrestling rules suggest, negligent *hellanodikai* were also liable to sanctions. Moreover, their decisions were open to appeals. This is hardly surprising, given the enormous prestige and cultural capital, both for individual athletes and their communities, of Olympic victories. During the second quarter of the fifth century BCE it was probably the board of *mastroi*, magistrates with powers to review the decisions of other officials, that heard appeals to the judgments of *hellanodikai*.¹⁹ However, by the early fourth century BCE the Olympic council had taken up the right to hear such appeals. In the Olympic games of 396 BCE two of the *hellanodikai* assigned to the *stadion* race, which ended in a dead-heat between Leon of Ambrakia and Eupolemos of Elis, declared Eupolemos as the winner while one judge voted for Leon.²⁰ The latter appealed the decision, perhaps first to the board of the *hellanodikai* and then to the Olympic council. The council fined the two *hellanodikai* who awarded the victory to Eupolemos, but did not overturn the latter’s victory. Similarly, it was most likely the Olympic council that heard the appeal of Athens in the case of the Athenian athlete Kallippos who was fined for bribing his opponents during the Olympic games of 322 BCE.²¹

Perhaps the most famous interstate dispute involving the Olympic games occurred in 420 BCE between Elis and Sparta. According to Thucydides and Xenophon, in that year the Eleans claimed that Sparta had violated the Olympic truce and a court imposed on the offending party a fine of 2,000 *mnai* and a ban from competitions and sacrifices at Olympia.²² The Spartans sent delegates and pleaded against the decision but Elis sustained the original verdict. The identity of the court involved in the events of 420 BCE and its possible links to other Elean institutions, including the Olympic council, remain in doubt. The assumption that the court in question consisted exclusively of Elean judges is in keeping with the events as described in the sources.²³ Moreover, there is no compelling reason to believe that a c. 475 BCE inscription from Olympia referring to an arbitration is somehow related to an “Olympic” tribunal, the *hellanodikai*, or to a violation of the Olympic *ekecheiria*.²⁴ The question of the identity and number of tribunals empowered to adjudicate Olympic matters is further complicated by the fact that court voting tokens of the Hellenistic period have been discovered in both the vicinity of the theater in Elis and in the area near the *bouleuterion* in Olympia.²⁵ This suggests, if not two different tribunals, at least two different meeting venues. If one tribunal is assumed, then the choice of location could have been determined on the basis of the content of each case and its relevance to the Olympic games.

The legal framework covering the operation of the Olympic and other major games adjusted over time to correspond to the wider social and political conditions as well as the dominant ideology of sport. A case in point concerns the perceptions and rules governing athletic victory. Normally there was only one victor per event in Greek institutionalized sport, and it was this single victor that could claim the glory and accolades that emanated from their accomplishment. In the Archaic period draws were allowed in ad hoc elite games, e.g. funeral games – one is reminded of the draw between Odysseus and Telamonian Ajax in wrestling during the funeral games of Patroklos.²⁶ Beyond exclusive elite games draws are very rarely attested in other games during the Archaic and Classical periods. On rare occasions, most notably in the Athenian Panathenaia, prizes were also awarded to second-place finishers.²⁷ But for the overwhelming majority of contestants in the games hosted by sanctuaries and cities winning a race or a bout was the only desirable outcome. In the famous words of Pindar, those who do not win “slink through the back alleys, furtively away from their enemies, painfully bitten by their loss.”²⁸

This situation was partially modified during the Hellenistic and Imperial periods through the formal introduction of the draw in institutionalized Greek sport, predominantly in combat events, which resulted in competitors being “jointly crowned.”²⁹ In such cases officials awarded a crown or other prize to two athletes. When umpires could not decide on a victor they declared the victory “sacred,” i.e. dedicated to the gods. By good fortune we know more details about the circumstances of the first “sacred” victory in Olympia through the rhetorically flamboyant decree for Tiberius Claudius Rufus, a pankratiast who

competed in Olympia and “thought it better to scorn life than the hope of the crown.”³⁰ According to his honorary decree Rufus competed “in a magnificent and admirable manner” (l.15) and, being pitted in the final against an athlete who had enjoyed a bye, strove for the Olympic wreath until nightfall, whereupon the judges declared a “sacred” victory.

Literary authors suggest that athletes could often exploit or manipulate the rules to induce the outcome of a bout. Sole victory was always preferable, but sometimes a draw was also sought. Polybius claimed that good wrestlers could skillfully arrange a draw and Pausanias suggests that combat sport athletes could manipulate the rules to achieve the desired result.³¹ According to this passage in Pausanias that was exactly what happened in the boxing final of the Nemean games c. 400 BCE between Kreugas of Epidamnos and Damoxenos of Syracuse. As evening drew near and the two were still fighting, they came to an agreement to allow each other a strike, presumably to decide the victor. Damoxenos struck with open fingers under Kreugas’ ribs, drove his hand into his abdomen and killed him on the spot. The officials expelled Damoxenos from the games for breaking his agreement with Kreugas by striking him multiple times (i.e. with open fingers) and awarded the victory to Kreugas. In another example a recently published papyrus contains an informal contract between the father and the trainer of Nikantinos and the guarantors of Demetrios, two boy wrestlers active in third-century CE Egypt.³² The document is dated to 267 CE and lays out the details of an agreement between the two parties to fix the final of the boys’ wrestling in the upcoming Great Antinoeia games. According to this arrangement, Demetrios was to yield victory to Nikantinos for the sum of 3,800 drachmas. Moreover, the document contains provisions for compensation in case the bout was declared “sacred” by the Antinoeia officials, or in case Demetrios reneged on the deal.³³

The establishment and increased frequency of draws as an official outcome does not mean that the perception of the uniqueness of athletic victory had disappeared during the Hellenistic and Imperial periods. Winning crowns in the major games across the Greek-speaking world was until late antiquity the best way to accumulate fame and social capital through athletics. Athletes continued to publicize their individual victories and their cumulative records in commemorative monuments. Moreover, in the Hellenistic and Imperial periods sport victory memorials increasingly employed surplus-value neologisms that further qualified extraordinary victories, for instance about an athlete having achieved a victory or set of victories first among his fellow citizens (e.g. “first among Rhodians”), or first among athletes originating from a particular geographic area (“first among Greeks”).³⁴ In addition to such circumlocutions expressing unique athletic feats, the notion of the indivisible athletic victory is encountered in stories that conveyed the message that athletic victory at the highest level was as precious as life itself. In some cases, athletes were portrayed as presented during a contest with the dilemma of victory or death.³⁵ In turn, those who died in competition are often glorified in language reminiscent of

rhetorical *topoi* used to honor soldiers who died in battle. A most striking case concerns Agathos Daimon, also known as Kamelos, of Alexandria, an athlete of the third century CE who died while competing in Olympia “having prayed to Zeus for the crown or death.”³⁶ The symbolic power of sole victory is also suggested by the fact that athletic superstars, as for instance the famous pankratiast Marcus Aurelius Asklepiades, took pride in the fact that they had never shared a victory.³⁷

How to explain, then, the increasingly attested joint or “sacred” victories in athletic commemorative monuments of the Imperial period?³⁸ The expanded circuit of the *periodos* and local agonistic festivals, consisting of hundreds of games, provided more opportunities for the accumulation of victories but also greater opportunities for participation, especially at the local levels. It was not unusual for local games organized by individual cities to have tens or even hundreds of entries in athletic events.³⁹ Given the elevated status of athletics as a hallmark Hellenic cultural practice, for occasional athletes or professional athletes of lower caliber and especially of younger age-groups, even a shared victory was represented as desirable or honorable. Since even in such cases athletes could still reap some of the social capital associated with athletic victory, it is reasonable to assume that in cases of balanced and inconclusive bouts competitors would have been more willing to accede to a draw.⁴⁰

A related development is that during the Imperial period the dominant system of representation of athletic achievements widened to incorporate discourses that partly diluted the preponderance of victory as uniquely deserving commemoration. Strong performance in a major contest was therefore advertised as athletic distinction and some athletes bragged about the fact that they competed in the final of an event, without winning or drawing, at the Olympic and other major contests.⁴¹ Eventually, even mere participation in a major contest became in some quarters a source of pride and as a result the notion of an honorable mention in the absence of victory took root, at least in some parts of the Greek-speaking world. Thus in a decree of 58 BCE the city of Delphi commended Hermokrates, an athlete from Smyrna, for competing “worthily” (ἀξίως) at the Pythian games, ostensibly without winning the crown.⁴² At the local level, there are several known cases of athletes of the Imperial period who conspicuously advertised the fact that they have “competed with distinction” (ἐνδόξως ἀγωνισάμενον), again without winning or drawing, in a local contest.⁴³ Even though in the preceding examples athletic performances were not accompanied by victories, claims to have competed worthily or gloriously were eventually used by athletes as hard-earned tokens of distinction also in cases of victory: in one instance an ἐνδόξως postscript was added, in a different hand after the remainder of the inscription was carved, in a third-century CE honorary text recording the victory of an athlete from Herakleia in the Pontus at the Asklepeia games in Ankyra.⁴⁴

Furthermore, athletes of local caliber could at times be vague – or deliberately misleading – regarding the epigraphic representation of their victories, in an attempt to capitalize on the enormous cachet of athletic achievement. More

specifically, in some cases victorious athletes in local games exploited the practical constraints of epigraphic representation as well as the ambiguity created by the co-existence of multiple contests named after the original Big Four panhellenic and other famous games, to unintentionally convey the impression that they might have been victors in one of the renowned contests. This was easier to do during the Imperial period when the number of contests that were named after the prestigious and ancient games of mainland Greece (i.e. Olympic, Pythian etc.) proliferated. M. Aurelius Toalis, a citizen of Olympos and Arykanda in Lykia, was one of those athletes. His commemorative monument was erected in Oinoanda following his victory in the boys' *pankration* at the local Euaresteia games in the third century CE. The inscription also recorded that Toalis was a *paradoxos*, i.e. "extraordinary" victor, which probably meant that he won in at least two different events. Below the main inscription five crowns were depicted, commemorating victories in the Olympic (twice), Pythian and Actian (twice) games. Since Toalis is recorded only as *paradoxos* victor but not *hieronikes*, it is certain that the Olympic, Pythian and Actian games in which he won were local versions, probably in Asia Minor, of the famous namesakes.⁴⁵ But the lack of any reference to that important detail as well as the layout of the monument, which closely resembles near contemporary monuments of athletes who had actually won in the *periodos* or other prominent contests (e.g. Ebert 1972, no. 81), might have led some less well-informed observers to believe that Toalis was also an athlete with success at the highest level of competition.⁴⁶

One can observe, therefore, how changes in the legal framework governing the operation of Greek sport regarding the status of joint victories, as well as in the nomenclature of local games in a manner that alluded to the major interstate games of the *periodos*, in the long-term resulted in the gradual adaptation of perceptions and valuations of athletic victory. Although the concept of winning at all costs in the most prestigious games remained dominant among the top-tier athletes, during the Imperial period athletes of modest physical ability skillfully pursued and then rhetorically exploited joint victories or other athletic "achievements" as another means to consolidate their elevated civic status and their membership in a Hellenic cultural *koine*.

2 The legal framework of other panhellenic and local games

Even though the legal framework of the Olympic games is better attested, a fair amount is also known about the pattern of organization, the officials and the rules governing the conduct of other panhellenic and local games. In city-states that hosted numerous games, for instance, civic authorities often decreed customized regulations of athletic contests and appointed the officials responsible for supervising them.⁴⁷ Furthermore, truces of varying durations and content are attested in connection with panhellenic and local festivals beyond the Olympic games.⁴⁸ Cases of rule infringement and other mischief are also widely attested beyond Olympia to the extent that in the early third century CE Philostratus presented corruption and foul play as endemic attributes of Greek athletics.⁴⁹

Regulations governing the conduct of the Olympic and other major games often served as a blueprint for other athletic contests, especially those claiming “isolympic,” “isopythian” etc. status. Games asserting a similar status to panhellenic contests adopted much of the structure (events, age-groups, prizes) of the original contests. One should not, however, assume an absolute overlap between the regulations and procedures of e.g. the Olympic and the various “isolympic” games. A case in point is *IvO* 56, an inscription of the first or second century CE discovered in Olympia, which outlines the rules and organizational principles of the Sebastan Olympic Games at Naples.⁵⁰ The Sebasta, originally established by Augustus, had *periodos* status and hence a victory in these games was a coveted accolade for any Greek athlete. Since the publication of the letters of Hadrian of 134 CE, we also know that the Sebasta were an integral part of the “western tour” of top games during the second year of a four-year cycle.⁵¹ The location of the host city Naples, which was off the main path for anyone but the most mobile and successful of Greek athletes, might partly account for some of the peculiarities of the regulatory framework and organization of the Sebasta. The organizing authorities certainly aimed at creating a grand festival with a rich program of diverse contests and entertainments, while preserving the standing and reputation of the Sebasta as one of the major agonistic festivals of the Greek world.

As all the other major games, the Sebasta were announced through a special delegation (*theoria*) throughout the Greek-speaking world. Similar to the Olympics in Elis, the isolympic Sebasta required from athletes a mandatory 30-day training in the host city. Athletes were subsidized during that period, undoubtedly as an additional incentive to undertake the journey to Italy.⁵² There were detailed regulations for admission and registration of athletes, including a list of valid excuses for those who had missed the registration deadline.⁵³ As one can imagine, a number of controversies could arise so a clause that outlined the process in cases of litigation was appended.⁵⁴ The remainder of the inscription, whose purpose was probably to advertise the Sebasta in the sanctuary of Zeus in Olympia, is mostly taken up with a list of the various events and their prizes. In addition to the most common athletic, combat and equestrian events, the Sebasta also hosted musical and dramatic competitions, another departure from the Olympic games in Elis.

Moreover, compared to the Olympic games in Elis there were more age-groups (*sebaste krisis*; *klaudiane krisis*) admitted in the Sebasta. There were also competitions for young girls (*parthenoi*). Much of this was already known or surmised with the help of inscriptions of the Imperial period, but as of late our knowledge has expanded through a series of, still partially published, victor lists of the Sebasta dating to the late first century CE.⁵⁵ We now know, for instance, that in addition to the previously known race for the daughters of Neapolitan councilors, there were also races (at least *stadion* and *diaulos*) for girls open to contestants from all over the Greek world. In c. 82 BCE, for instance, the *stadion* race for girls was won by Fl. Thalassia from Ephesos.⁵⁶ The Sebasta also included a torch-race (*lampas*) in memory of its founder Augustus.⁵⁷

It is apparent, therefore, that the organizers of the Sebastia endeavored to go beyond the isolympic status by creating a grand, diverse, perhaps over the years expanding and certainly firmly regulated program of athletic and other events. Very few cities or other entities would have been able to match the scope and breadth of the Sebastia program, a clear indication that the organizing authorities spared no effort or expense in their attempt to make their festival a stable feature of Greek agonistic life. A total of 57 different events are attested, including 32 in athletics, 6 in equestrian sport and 19 musical and artistic.⁵⁸ The Sebastia continued to be a popular contest for athletes: during the first half of the third century CE, for instance, Demetrios of Salamis defeated 87 competitors in the men's *stadion*.⁵⁹ In fact, it might not be an exaggeration to argue that the establishment and subsequent flourishing of the Sebastia was a crucial stage in the consolidation of a hybrid Greco-Roman culture of sport and leisure, discussed in more detail in Chapter 6. The international appeal of the Sebastia, as attested by the diverse origin of known victors, would have been an expedient vehicle for the partial dissemination of Greco-Roman multiculturalism, at the very least among social elites and top-tier athletes.

Once we shift our focus from the international to the local level, we encounter the same preoccupation with detailed regulation. However in the case of *themides* of small cities, especially in Asia Minor during the Imperial period, the perspective is strikingly less cosmopolitan. Regulations of local games, in other words, were clearly geared towards local concerns and values. Contrary to the broader regulatory framework of Greek sport (e.g. technical rules for particular events), the rules governing the games of a particular locale were often not fixed reference points but rather the end products of a long, complex and uneven process of articulation and implementation. As Noel Dyck, from a comparative standpoint, points out:

Although rules are a constituent element of games and sports and invest these activities with relatively predictable form and a required illusion of certainty, the manner in which sport rules are negotiated, invoked, enforced, manipulated, evaded and altered renders them intensely social matters that analysts can scarcely afford to take for granted.⁶⁰

The result of this process of negotiation and implementation of the legal framework for local games was regulatory diversity. Thus, even though it was not unusual for some local contests to replicate features of the program and the administrative structure of major games, there was also considerable flexibility in deciding issues of eligibility, age-categories, program, prizes as well as a plethora of other matters. Most of this can be deduced from honorary inscriptions for victorious athletes and local benefactors, and sometimes such inscriptions make explicit references to the regulations of a contest. For instance, a third-century CE decree from Side for an unknown athlete, possibly in one of the combat events, points out that the athlete in question was awarded the victory crown in accordance with the regulations (*nomous*) of the local *themis*.⁶¹

Regulations of some local contests, primarily dating to the Imperial period, have survived in mostly fragmentary format. Such regulations existed for both state-funded contests, e.g. the Leonidaia in Sparta, as well as lesser-known local games that were established through the generosity of a local benefactor – note, in the latter case, the foundation charter of the Demostheneia in Oinoanda in the second century CE.⁶² The legal frameworks of games established through foundations were also formally endorsed by civic authorities and were then typically inscribed and publicly displayed. They had to conform to wider standards of regulatory behavior and practices, local custom as well as the expectations of athletes and audiences.

A recently published regulation for the Vadiseia, an annual agonistic festival conducted in Messene during the Imperial period, illustrates the process of establishing and regulating games of a modest/local caliber.⁶³ The festival, which is known through two partially preserved decrees, was funded by a foundation in honor or memory of a certain Vadisias, and comprised athletic games, a procession – consisting of boys, armed youths and other citizens – a sacrifice and a communal feast in which citizens, *paroikoi*, foreigners and slaves were allowed to take part. Notable is the section that prescribes the monetary prizes to be awarded. The Vadiseia was one of the few agonistic festivals that provided prizes – albeit modest – both to victors and second-place finishers, ranging from 2 to 6 *drachmai*. The prizes for men were slightly higher for the prizes of other age-groups. In the *euoplia* the victor received a shield that he subsequently dedicated to a local temple.

Regulations for local contests did not contain clauses with technical rules for the various events unless there was a departure from standard practice. A contest in Misthia in Lykaonia dated no earlier than the second century CE was such a rare exception.⁶⁴ The regulation for this contest prescribed that pankratiasts that competed in the games in question were not allowed to wrestle and could only fight standing up – the intention probably being to divest wrestlers from an advantage when competing in the *pankration*. This rule was certainly at odds with mainstream *pankration* rules as commonly practiced throughout the Greek world, which prohibited only gouging and biting.

The regulation of this rather eccentric contest in Misthia also reveals that slaves were allowed to compete at these games with the provision that in case of victory they had to share a quarter of their prize money with other competitors. This was highly unusual but also sent a clear message that regardless of the generosity of the organizers slaves were still of an inferior social and legal status. There was also a prescription that a victor at an event was barred from competing at other events as well as a provision that, in the equestrian competitions, each contestant could only compete with a single horse. An obvious objective of such a set of regulations was to spread the honor of victory far and wide, an objective that, as the growing propensity to award joint and “sacred” victories also demonstrates, was a common thread in many local games of the Imperial period.

3 Eligibility in local games

Eligibility criteria for participation in panhellenic and local games was another subsection of the regulatory framework of Greek sport that stood at the intersection between sport and civic life. Variations in the eligibility for participation in athletic contests can be documented throughout the history of ancient Greek sport. I have already discussed (Chapter 3.6) some examples of League festivals and games and their significance. Moreover, the Hellenic descent requirement that was in place for centuries in the Olympic games and other festivals, only to be diluted when the political landscape changed starting in the Hellenistic period, or the permission given to young girls to compete in a separate category of races in some agonistic festivals, e.g. the Sebastia, are merely some instances of the diversity of the rules for formal eligibility discussed thus far. In addition, elaborate distinctions in age-categories for boys and men promoted the crystallization of legal and social statuses by permitting participation to certain events, and at times even entire festivals, only by certain groups.

A case in point concerns the agonistic festivals with narrow admission criteria, most commonly membership in a particular community expressed through citizenship or formal association with a subdivision of the citizenry. In Classical and Hellenistic Athens the program of the Panathenaia and the Theseia included some events open only to Athenian citizens, competing individually or in teams representing tribes. A second category of events in the same festivals were accessible to all athletes (ἐκ πάντων), i.e. from Athens and beyond.⁶⁵ Extant victory lists reveal a remarkable array of corporate identities among Athenian athletes that go well beyond the basic citizen/non-citizen or standard agonistic age-categories distinctions. Hence in the Hellenistic Theseia, competitors in contests reserved for Athenian citizens were categorized according to tribes, their participation in the city's *ephebeia*, or their training in a particular *palaistra* or *gymnasion*.⁶⁶ Moreover, in the same contests some equestrian events were open only to Athenian citizens according to military rank, e.g. members of the Athenian elite infantry, the tribal contingent leaders, and the cavalrymen.⁶⁷

The effect of these events for fostering an *esprit de corps* among the various Athenian groupings must have been considerable. Most of the citizenry subdivisions that were given the right to compete in separate events in the Theseia consisted of men who trained together in the army, the cavalry or in one of the city's *palaistrai* and *gymnasias*. Beyond civic agonistic festivals like the Theseia these groups were afforded numerous other opportunities to develop close-knit bonds of camaraderie and corporate identities. For instance, games for *gymnasia* trainees, often dedicated to Hermes, Heracles or mortal benefactors, were commonplace throughout Athens and the Greek world. The Veroia *gymnasion* law includes lengthy and detailed provisions for the local Hermaia while victors' lists from Hellenistic Ephesos and Chios suggest that participants in such games were in principle young men of different age-groups (*paidēs*, *epheboi*, *neoteroi*).⁶⁸

Overall, even though we should expect that rules governing such *gymnasion* games might differ slightly between cities, in principle these *gymnasion* contests were accessible mainly by young men of citizen status as well as, occasionally, by non-citizens who were granted the right to train in a local *ephebeia*.⁶⁹

Although *gymnasion* contests held exclusively for eligible trainees were a fairly common occurrence, athletic games that restricted participation only to the citizens of a single community were rarer. Their frequency, nevertheless, seems to have increased during the Imperial period. They mostly took place in athletic festivals that were financed through foundations. Foundations for cultic practices and games eventually became the most efficient legal instrument for the establishment of games.⁷⁰ It must be remembered that the foundation donors had considerable flexibility for prescribing long-term rules of the games they were financing, including participation eligibility restrictions, special allowances for marginalized groups, as well regulations regarding events and prizes. When there was no long-term foundation in place, *agonothetai* who financed the operation of a single or a short series of festivals could also dictate regulatory principles for the festival they financed and oversaw.

In one case from the Hellenistic period, the foundation of Kritolaos from Aigiale in Amorgos in memory of his son Aleximachos designated details about a feast and games, and included a prescription that there will be no *pankration* contest and that Aleximachos, the donor's deceased son who probably specialized in that event, would be declared victor.⁷¹ The terms of the foundation also suggest that the games were open only to the citizens of Aegiale. It is also explicitly stated that the prizes for the boys and men competitions were to be arranged according to the local *gymnasion* law (ll. 82–3). Similarly, the decree of 124 CE containing the provisions of the foundation for the Demostheneia games at Oinoanda prescribes in emphatic terms the establishment of an athletic contest in which only citizens were permitted to participate.⁷² In other cases the existence of such games open only to citizens can be inferred from extant victors' monuments, as in e.g. the Augusteia games in Olbasa, the Meleagria games in Balboursa as well as numerous other *themides* in small and mid-range cities of Roman Asia minor.⁷³ *Themides* of small cities usually sported a limited program of events – wrestling and *pankration* were almost always included in the program, and at times boxing and a running event. Regarding the Augusteia in Olbasa we know of victors only in the men's wrestling and *pankration*, all citizens of Olbasa. In one case two athletes were jointly crowned as victors in the men's wrestling.⁷⁴

It was also not unusual for different *themides* hosted by the same city to set up diverse eligibility rules for athletes. For instance, in Syedra, a city in Cilicia, four different *themides* are attested in honor of Ladike, the pair Zoilos and Theodoriane, as well as for Tydianos and for Mousonios.⁷⁵ Only victors in two age-groups, i.e. boys and men, in boxing, wrestling and *pankration* are recorded. The extant record of victors in these games is suggestive of the possible participation eligibility restrictions that the foundations establishing these *themides* had imposed. In the

games honoring Ladike the honorary inscriptions for local victors include the ethnic Syedrios, which suggests that the games were open to citizens of other cities outside Syedra. This assumption is confirmed by inscriptions for two victors at the ninth iteration of the Ladike *themis*, namely Aurelius Antonis from Aspendos, a *hieronikes paradoxos* who won the men's *pankration* and Marcus Aurelius Eleis from Anemourion who was victor in the wrestling for boys.⁷⁶ But in the case of victors in the *themis* in honor of Tydianos no ethnic is given, which strongly suggests that these games were open only to citizens of Syedra.

However, and irrespective of whether benefactors and organizing authorities aimed at attracting foreign athletes to their *themides* or whether they prioritized the articulation of social distinctions through sport within their communities, realistically the conditions created by the overcrowded calendar of athletic contests during the Imperial period often consigned the *themides* of small cities, as far as top-tier athletes were concerned, to the periphery of athletic competition.⁷⁷ In the case of the Syedra *themides*, out of the 13 victors whose city of origin can be ascertained or deduced with confidence, 11 were citizens of the host city and only two, Antonis from Aspendos and Eleis from Anemourion, were citizen of neighboring cities.⁷⁸ A comprehensive examination of victors' lists and honorary inscriptions from small-city *themides* and other limited-appeal games of the Imperial period suggests that Syedra was a typical case.⁷⁹ In other words, even in the case of local-caliber games that were accessible to athletes of other communities, the extant record suggests that the majority of victors, and most likely the majority of contestants, were citizens of the host city.⁸⁰ A restrictive regulatory framework, geographical distance and other factors related to the calendar of contests as well as minimal incentives (e.g. low-value prizes) kept many non-citizen athletes away from local *themides*, thus opening up additional opportunities for locals to compete in sport and reap all the social and cultural rewards that accompanied a victory.

In the case of the Meleagria games, a *themis* held from c. 158 CE until at least the second quarter of the third century CE in the city of Balbura, victory monuments allow a glimpse of the ideological import and the social dynamic behind the decision of benefactors to seal off their athletic games to outsiders. This is a well-documented case where a subsection of the population, i.e. the civic elites, used effectively and to their advantage the control they exercised over the regulatory framework of local sport practices as well as the means of dissemination of meanings generated by these practices through representation. The Meleagria was in principle open to all citizens of Balbura but in effect the contest was dominated by the local ruling elite. A number of family links are documented between most of the known victors, who seemed to have had a near monopoly in the training and practice of sport as suggested e.g. by the fact that on two occasions the same athlete won the wrestling and the *stadion* race. These were individuals who had benefitted from athletic training since a young age and were therefore expected to step forward and compete at the local games where they enjoyed very high chances of success. On the contrary, non-elites would have had fewer opportunities to train

for sustained periods of time and hence might have been more reluctant to compete in games, local or interstate. In other words, lack of elite status and the opportunities for training and competition it entailed could potentially operate as an exclusion mechanism that deterred many from venturing into local games, even in cases of competitions such as the Balbouran Meleagria that were accessible only to citizens.

In one case, a victory monument for Troilos celebrated his victories in the wrestling and the *stadion* race in two iterations of the Meleagria.⁸¹ Troilos's brother Mousaios won the *pankration* and *stadion* in the following celebration of the same *themis* and his son Aurelius Simonides was victor in the men's wrestling soon after 212 CE.⁸² This was a formidably athletic family, at least for local standards, yet combinations of victories in combat and running events were extremely rare, although not unheard of, even in local games.⁸³ The fact that Troilos and Mousaios achieved three double victories in combat and running events while at the same time they are not known for any victories beyond their home city is indicative of the dynamics of competition that favored social elite athletes in small-city *themides*.

Most importantly, Troilos, Mousaios and other victors at the Meleagria explicitly commemorated their prominent social status on their victory monuments. Such monuments refer to these local athletes, often in a verbose and self-indulging manner, as from "the leading class," from "the most honorable among us" or as from "the first rank in the city, kinsman of League officials of the Nation, his father a League official."⁸⁴ Such status qualifications are included in all but one of the monuments of victors at the Meleagria, and are encountered in honorary monuments of athletes and *agonothetai* of other cities during the Imperial era, especially in Asia Minor.⁸⁵ The stylistic uniformity of the rhetoric employed in these monuments and their pattern of distribution in the civic landscape of Balboursa might indicate that victory commemoration was perhaps regulated or overseen, in accordance with the provisions of the foundation that funded the festival, by the *agonothetai* and other civic officials.

For local spectators the athletic contests of the Meleagria might have appeared as a ritualized re-affirmation of the prominent rank of Troilos, Mousaios and other members of the Balbouran leading class. For these local dignitaries victory at the Meleagria was another way to shore up their hegemonic status through a performative process that comprised competition and victory commemoration. And the victory monuments, with their formulaic and bombastic assertions of elite pedigree, were tangible consecrations of inequality. All that was readily understood and acknowledged by the civic audience. In such a context the desire for victory was paramount, yet when no clear victor emerged organizers of the Meleagria, following the pattern observed in other cities of Asia Minor during the Imperial period, eagerly awarded joint victories in combat events, which allowed both finalists to claim the honors and prestige emanating from athletic victory and share the commemoration of their achievement in the same monument. During the seventh celebration of the Meleagria, c. 190 CE, "Proklian's son

of Hermaios, son of Artemon, son of Hermaios, son of Artemon, son of Kastor, and Mousaios, son of Troilos, son of Mousaios” were jointly crowned victors in the boys’ wrestling having competed honorably.⁸⁶

The emphatic references to the pedigrees of the joint victors are indicative of their high social standing and it was perhaps not an accident that Proklianios, the victor with the most distinguished five generations of ancestors was mentioned first. Similarly, in the eleventh iteration of the games, c. 220 CE, Aurelius Kalandion, son of Thoas, son of Thoas, son of Menophilos, son of Thoas, and Aurelius Kointos, son of Sextos, son of Sextos, son of Kointos, were proclaimed joint victors in the boys’ wrestling.⁸⁷ Once again, Aurelius Kalandion takes precedence because of his more distinguished pedigree of four generations of ancestors, some of whom served as officials in the Lykian league and engaged in agonistic benefactions in Balboura.⁸⁸ If the pool of contestants at the Meleagria was as small and as socially exclusive as the extant sample of victory monuments suggest, then mere participation at the games would have been sufficient to instantiate in the eyes of the community the high social standing of almost all athletes. In such a context victory would have represented a crowning moment that allowed the athletes to commemorate their status, confirmed through sport, in monumental fashion.

4 Regulation of athletic facilities and training programs

The modes of regulation of athletic facilities, especially those primarily employed for training and educational purposes (*gymnasia* and *palaistrai*) provide additional insights on the meaning-generating power of sport in the Greek world.⁸⁹ Similar to local games, especially in small cities, training facilities normally presented the opportunity to a wider cross-section of citizen males, i.e. beyond the class of professional athletes, to engage in some aspects of sport practices in the context of physical education classes or other programs of training for youths (*ephebeia*). Moreover, in some cities subaltern groups (slaves, women, non-citizens) also had some limited opportunities to get involved with the local *gymnasion*, usually in the context of special occasions such as civic agonistic festivals. As a result, athletic facilities were at the center of the negotiation between formal, i.e. legally endorsed, rules and customary/cultural perceptions on the conduct and value of sport. Widely held perceptions were locally conditioned and quite often, as the evidence strongly suggests, infiltrated the legal framework governing the organization and life of athletic facilities. Hence the extraordinary variety and malleability of regulatory regimes for *gymnasia* and *palaistrai* encountered throughout the Greek world.

Gymnasia and *palaistrai* existed in urban areas and interstate sanctuaries from the late Archaic period until late antiquity. These facilities were in principle “public,” in the sense that they were accessible by those qualified, through civic laws or widely accepted practice, to use them. In some cities there is evidence to suggest that some *palaistrai* were privately owned and operated, but again normally *palaistrai* were “public,” often built in a joint complex with a *gymnasion*.

Civic authorities to a significant extent legally regulated the administration, operation and activities of these facilities. The method of appointment and responsibilities of the gymnasiarchs and other officials associated with *gymnasia* and *palaistrai* varied across the Greek world.⁹⁰ During the Classical and early Hellenistic periods the evidence suggests that civic authorities tended to be more heavily involved in the operation of athletic facilities. The individuals who superintended athletic complexes were often civic officials who managed state funds and were accountable for their actions. By contrast, in the late Hellenistic and Imperial era, the upkeep and operations of athletic complexes and the activities they hosted, including the *ephebeia*, although still subject to civic regulation and intervention, to a great extent depended on the generosity of wealthy patrons who were vested with civic officialdom. As a result the various positions associated with the *gymnasion* essentially became voluntary liturgies.⁹¹

Two laws and one edict from Hellenistic and Roman Macedonia exemplify these trends. First, a well-known second-century BCE law from Veroia regulates in detail various activities of the *gymnasion* of the city.⁹² The gymnasiarch and his assistants were responsible for supervising the training of youths, enforcing the rules and maintaining order. Furthermore, the law prescribed the categories of persons who did not have access to the *gymnasion* (more on this point below), outlined the arrangements for the Hermaia festival and stipulated procedures for prosecuting offenders, especially negligent officials. Detailed penalties for a number of other infractions were also included. Moreover, a law dated to 24/3 BCE, which includes material from an earlier law dating to the Hellenistic period, was set up in the *gymnasion* of Amphipolis. The law contains extensive provisions for the local *ephebeia* and illuminates various aspects of the life of the local *gymnasion*.⁹³

The picture of bustling athletic activity in the Veroia *gymnasion* adumbrated by the second-century BCE law contrasts sharply to the conditions alluded in a late first/early second-century CE proconsular edict from the same city.⁹⁴ The document in question records the attempts of Memmius Rufus, proconsul of Macedonia, to reach a permanent solution to the periodic closure of the *gymnasion* of Veroia. The edict suggests that the main causes of this state of affairs were the shortage of immediately accessible financial resources as well as the inability of the city's elite to reach a satisfactory arrangement. The latter corroborates the importance of elite munificence in maintaining the operation of the *gymnasion*, the *ephebeia* and civic athletics in the Greek-speaking parts of the empire. In the case of Veroia, the proconsul's solution was to create a permanent gymnasia fund and finance the workings of Veroia's *gymnasion* from the fund's annual return.

In addition to logistical and financial matters, the mode and the extent to which non-citizens were excluded or allowed to participate in the activities of *gymnasia* and *palaistrai* were symptomatic of communal perceptions on the value of sport, the administrative complexity surrounding the operation of athletic facilities, as well as the clout and personal inclinations of individual benefactors. Slaves were non-citizens *par excellence*, and any opportunity to partake in athletic competition (as, e.g., in the case of Misthia, discussed in

section 2 of the present chapter) or *gymnasion* training, ultimately highlighted the exceptional nature of these acts of temporary inclusion. Even though slaves were rarely allowed to participate in competitive sport, they were more visible in training facilities, usually as multi-purpose workers or sparring partners for athletes.⁹⁵ In rare cases slaves were granted the right to exercise in *gymnasia*, as in the case of the foundation of Phaenia Aromation in Gytheion, but this right was hedged with multiple restrictions. In Gytheion this was a token concession that allowed slaves to train in the local *gymansion* only six days per year due to the generosity of oil provision of Phaenia, and the legally binding text of the foundation considers the possibility that officials were likely to object to this provision regarding slaves.⁹⁶

Looking beyond the status of slaves, there were a number of alternate personal or corporate identities that were negotiated and consolidated through sport practices. The Gortyn Law Code, a compilation of late-archaic legal prescriptions from this major Cretan city, refers to young men who have reached legal maturity, i.e. around 20 years of age, as *dromeis* (runners).⁹⁷ Correlatively, the minors that had not yet reached this stage were called *apodromoi*, i.e. not yet runners. The distinction clearly had to do with the civically granted prerogative of the *dromeis* to strip off and train/compete in front of the adult male community. Most importantly, the Gortyn Law Code contains numerous provisions regarding the behavior, rights and obligations of *dromeis*. Becoming a “runner,” therefore, was tantamount in late Archaic and Classical Gortyn with the incorporation of the individual into a fully developed legal and civic framework.⁹⁸

As the case of *dromeis/apodromoi* from Gortyn and other examples discussed thus far suggest, regulatory frameworks for athletic facilities as well as statutory enactments not directly relevant to sport made distinctions of legal and social status explicit. A commonly encountered example concerns the regulation of accessibility to training venues by free persons with regard to their age, gender and citizenship status. In the epigraphic record this is closely intertwined with the rising number of attested *gymnasia* in Greek cities of the Hellenistic and Imperial periods. Most of the information regarding the various groups that trained in *gymnasia* derives primarily from honorary monuments for gymnasiarchs and other officials who were in charge of implementing civic regulations, informal norms and community values on athletic training. At the end of their tenure such officials and benefactors, especially the most generous ones, were customarily honored for their service, often by particular age or other corporate groups. Statutory legislation, especially the laws from Veroia and Amphipolis discussed earlier, also provide valuable insights. All of these sources adumbrate a general picture of bustling gymnasial life and point to an unmistakable trend of increasing reliance on euergetism over time.

A good case study of these trends is the Karian city of Iasos. During the late Hellenistic and early Imperial period Iasos had a lively agonistic and *gymnasion*

culture that, as in many other cities of the region, largely depended on and fed into a network of civic honors and commemoration. In IK *Iasos* 84 the *boule* and *demos* of the city honored Alexandros Alexandrou who served as gymnasiarch for the four *gymnasia* and made oil available throughout the day.⁹⁹ Furthermore, gymnasiarchs of the *neoi* and the elderly are attested for Iasos.¹⁰⁰ Another well-documented example is Pergamon, a wealthier and more populous than Iasos city, for which different inscriptions attest five, six and seven *gymnasia*.¹⁰¹ Training was conducted according to age and/or legal status, e.g. gymnasiarchs for *neoi* and *presbyteroi*, as well as for citizen boys, are attested.¹⁰² This pattern of designating *gymnasia* or gymnasiarchs according to training groups is widely documented, especially in Asia Minor during the Hellenistic and Imperial periods.¹⁰³

Despite the richness of the epigraphic record regarding training groups, several problems of interpretation remain. For instance, were training groups affiliated with particular training venues? Four venues of athletic training would have been rather excessive for a city the size of Iasos, and even for a city like Pergamon the construction of seven *gymnasia* would border on hyperbole – and let's not discount the fact that no archaeological evidence for such a high number of *gymnasia* has been discovered in these sites. Hence some scholars have reasonably suggested that these references to multiple *gymnasia* metaphorically allude to different age or corporate groups who shared a *gymnasion* venue. Alternatively, the theory goes, references to multiple *gymnasia* might also allude to the temporal cycles of *gymnasion*-related events (e.g. in connection with civic festivals) as well as to the succession of *gymnasion* officials.¹⁰⁴ It is indeed the case that, as numerous age or corporate groups had to share a limited number of gymnasial venues, special provisions were made to ensure that each of these groups had all they needed (e.g. oil, trainers) for their training regime.¹⁰⁵ It is also the case that short-term *gymnasiarchiai*, as well as *agonothesiai*, e.g. for the duration of civic festivals, did exist: this practice suited well the increased competition of civic elites for agonistic benefactions. Examples of such short-term agonistic benefactions from Imperial Stratonikeia are discussed in the following chapter.¹⁰⁶ The πανηγυρικόν *gymnasion* referred to in some inscriptions from Pergamon probably falls within the same category of a short-term *gymnasiarchia* for the duration of a *panegyris*.¹⁰⁷

However, in some cases references to multiple *gymnasia* are qualified by topographical determinants or in other ways that suggest allusion to a particular venue, as opposed to a training group or a benefactor's term of office. For instance, inscriptions from Iasos refer to the Ptolemaion and the Antiocheion *gymnasia*.¹⁰⁸ But if a city like Iasos had at least two different gymnasial venues, why shouldn't wealthier and more populous cities, e.g. Pergamon and Ephesos, have more? Indeed in Ephesos an "upper *gymnasion*" and a "Sebaston *gymnasion*" are attested, while in the more modest city of Thyateira an inscription refers to "the third *gymnasion*."¹⁰⁹ Moreover, an inscription from Didyma refers to *intra muros* burial in the *gymnasion* of the *neoi*.¹¹⁰

If we turn to Pergamon, a host of inscriptions refer to a *gymnasion* of the *neoi*, i.e. designated by age-group, in topographical terms. We hear, for example, of the

construction of a *stoa*, an *exedra* (terrace with seats) and the performance of miscellaneous refurbishments and renovations, as well as the conduct of a banquet or the dedication of an oil urn, all in the *gymnasion* of the youth (νέων) in Hellenistic and Imperial Pergamon.¹¹¹ In fact, Diorodos Paspáros, the Pergamene benefactor of the first century BCE who financed many construction and renovation projects in the *gymnasion* of the *neoi* did so at the time when the building was “entirely decayed.” As a result Paspáros was honored as its second founder (*ktistēs*, literally “builder” in the physical sense).¹¹²

All this suggests a certain lack of specificity in the manner in which *gymnasia* were designated. It is entirely plausible that the size of the gymnasial class was crucial in elaborating detailed designations of venues or training groups. It has been suggested, for instance, that in smaller cities a gymnasiarch designated as of the *neoi* was, in fact, in charge of supervising the training of all youths in the city.¹¹³ Similarly, in many cases a reference to a particular *gymnasion* appears to be designating a particular training group, usually along age or civic status categorizations. However, it is also clear that in many of the inscriptions from Pergamon and other cities surveyed in the previous paragraphs, the *gymnasion* of the *neoi* was also understood as a real-life, physical venue. The lack of clarity is augmented by the fact that, as already pointed out, training groups often had to share a training venue. So it is more reasonable to conclude that as participation in athletic training and competition expanded, especially after the late Hellenistic period, for many cities it would have been logistically challenging to accommodate the training of different age and status groups in a single or even two *gymnasia* venues. Expanding *gymnasion* facilities, in the form of enlargement of existing venues or the building of new ones, must have been a reality for most large and medium size Greek cities of the late Hellenistic and Imperial periods. These *gymnasia* were frequented by an increasing number of individuals who trained according to age or other group identities. The epigraphic idiom never really caught up with the profuse number of training classes and venues but, as the record suggests, this was hardly a problem for civic authorities, benefactors and sport practitioners in the Greek world.

Be that as it may, training groups in *gymnasia* deserve further attention. The proliferation and diversity of such groups warranted special honors for the benefactors who sponsored more than one. In Patara, Tiberius Claudius Flavianus Eudemos was honored for serving as *gymnasiarchos* for all age-groups (πάσης ἡλικίας) and paying all the expenses associated with the office.¹¹⁴ Which exactly these age-groups were is not explained, but other honorary monuments for benefactors shed some light on the range of expense incurred by Eudemos. For instance, a near-contemporary decree for a son of C. Julius Demosthenes specifies that the honoree had served as gymnasiarch of youths, *ephebes* and the elderly.¹¹⁵ When gymnasiarchs extended access to the *gymnasion* to groups beyond male citizens, and hence expanded their financial obligations associated with the office, they usually received special recognition. In one case from Dorylaion an honorary monument commemorates the tenure of Teuthras as

gymnasiarch of free and slaves while his wife, Antiochis, had served as gymnasiarch of women.¹¹⁶ It is also important to note that training groups consisting of citizens also had a distinctive civic function. They often, for instance, honored individuals (usually benefactors of the *gymnasion*) separately, i.e. individually as a group of *neoi*, *ephebes* etc., or in unison. So in Smyrna and Teos the *ephebes*, youths and the participants in the activities of the *gymnasion* (μετέχοντες τοῦ γυμνασίου) collectively honored individuals who served or assisted in the operation of *gymnasia*.¹¹⁷

Hence in addition to the consolidation of group identities the elaboration of categorizations based on legally defined age and legal statuses, in connection with the activities of the *gymnasion*, was also dictated by the need to accommodate the desire of civic elites to engage in agonistic euergetism. For the purposes of individual commemoration the use of *gymnasia* and *palaistrai* by different age-groups was inscribed into complex and self-validating narratives of civic benefaction. Such was the case of Aristetas from Iasos who was honored by the *demos*, council and *gerousia* of the city for serving as gymnasiarch of the elderly, general five times, ambassador to Rome, market-supervisor as well as in other civic positions. He was also commemorated for a joint foundation with his son Theaititos for providing oil in perpetuity during the ten month each year for the *gymnasia* of the youth and the elderly (τούς τε νέους καὶ τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους).¹¹⁸

Honorary inscriptions that record the use of athletic venues by different groups tend to smooth over any conflicts or deviations from legally endorsed norms. But the situation on the ground was more complex. In Classical Athens the constant physical interaction of people of different backgrounds resulted in the partial blurring of social and legal statuses. As the “Old Oligarch” complained, during the late fifth century BCE it was at times hard to visually distinguish a slave from a working-class member of the Athenian *demos* as both were dressed and comported themselves in a similar manner.¹¹⁹ These realities of urban life must have presented the authorities of sport facilities and games, especially in the most populous cities, with some difficulty in enforcing exclusion clauses. Slaves were specifically banned from training in the *gymnasion* in Veroia during the second century BCE, and a similar prohibition was in operation in the training venues of Classical Athens.¹²⁰ But the Veroia *gymnasion* law also provides a list of other undesirables many of whom were presumably citizens and who, similar to slaves, were not allowed to train in the city’s *gymnasion*. The list included, in the language of the Veroia law, freedmen and their sons, the *apalaistroi*, workers in the sex trade, merchants, drunks and madmen. Some of these individuals would have been easily identified by the gymnasiarch, others not so. In such cases, enforcing an exclusion clause would not have been a very straightforward matter. And indeed we have some evidence of greater inclusiveness in the *gymnasia* of some cities, perhaps the result of a more accommodating regulatory framework, e.g. the upper *gymnasion* of Thespiiai during the first century CE whose list of participants included a lady, perhaps a slave as well as individuals engaged in manual labor professions.¹²¹

The conclusion is that most cities had some formal regulations regarding eligibility for training in the *gymnasion* and participation in the *ephebeia*, but also that in some cases there were enough grey areas that made implementation of such rules by gymnasiarchs, ephebarchs and other officials a challenging task. It was this ambivalent situation that accounts for a family dossier of documents from Egypt whose main objective was to ensure the admission of the family's son into the local *ephebeia*. The four documents were produced in Alexandria in 83 CE and consist of a petition by Dionysios and Didyme that their son Dionysios should be enrolled in the local *ephebeia*.¹²² As supporting evidence they attach the *ephebeia* certificate of Dionysios the father, a copy of the birth certificate of Dionysios the son, as well as the latter's registration in the tribe Eirenophylakeios.¹²³ Taken together these documents demonstrate the cultural import of the *ephebeia* among Greek or Hellenized inhabitants of Alexandria, but also the anxiety of this particular family to comply with the admission requirements to the training program.

It is also evident that in most Greek cities of the Hellenistic and Imperial periods select non-citizens were also allowed to train in *gymnasia*. Hence during the Imperial period some gymnasiarchs were designated as "for the citizens" (πολε-ιτῶν), possibly suggesting that the expenses for the non-citizen trainees were covered by a different benefactor.¹²⁴ Eligibility to train in the *gymnasion* was often extended to non-citizen youths of free status who were permitted to train in another city's *ephebeia*. Such allowances were probably perceived as a grant of a special privilege in the form of partaking in the activities of an institution that was formative in the construction of notions of citizenship and community. IK Priene 41, 7–8 records *ephebes* recruited from among the *paroikoi* that were contrasted to the receivers of *aleimma* (oil provision) with citizen rights.¹²⁵ The practice of recruiting *ephebes* from non-citizen groups is also well-documented in Pergamon and Messene, both cities with thriving systems of *ephebeia*. An ephebic list from Pergamon includes a separate rubric for *xenoi* with the names of two *ephebes*, one from Stratonikeia and one from Tiarai.¹²⁶ Other ephebic lists from Pergamon refer to *ephebes* from other Asia Minor cities and well as Romans.¹²⁷ Similar to Pergamon in Messene graduating *ephebes* were listed according to their membership in one of the five traditional tribes. At some point a sixth tribe consisting of "foreigners" or "foreigners and Romans" was added.¹²⁸ Moreover, another ephebic list refers to youths from provincial Messenian towns who joined the *ephebeia* and trained for three years in the *gymnasion* of Messene.¹²⁹ In the last case these *ephebes* probably originated from neighboring settlements that the authorities of Messene were striving to bring or keep under control, partly by co-opting the scions of families of these outlying communities into Messene's flagship institution of Hellenic civic training.

Regardless of the ulterior motives that civic authorities and magistrates had for accepting non-citizen youths in the civic *ephebeia*, we have to assume that these youths participated fully and equally in the athletic, military and literary training that these educational regimes entailed. For instance, non-citizens are

in many cases attested among the contestants of *gymnasion* games in honor of Hermes and Heracles, i.e. games that were normally open only to *ephebes* and other trainees in a local *gymnasion*. Furthermore, IK *Lampsakos* 8, a fragment of an early Hellenistic civic decree that stipulated that teachers and students, ostensibly in the *gymnasion* and/or the *ephebeia*, from other cities were to receive tax exempt status (*ateleia*), strongly suggests that this was a sincere attempt to integrate these individuals into the educational and athletic fabric of the community. In light of the above, some of the references in honorary inscriptions to the bestowal of oil to foreigners in the context of the *gymnasion* should be understood as referring to non-citizen youths who were allowed to join the civic *ephebeia*.¹³⁰

The act of anointing the athlete's body with oil was a quintessential practice of Greek athletic training, so much so that the phrase "those who anoint themselves" stood for "those who train in the *gymnasion*." Sharing in the act of anointing oneself with oil was therefore tantamount to acceptance into a community and a token of Hellenicity. In addition to non-citizen *ephebes* who regularly trained in the *gymnasion*, generous gymnasiarchs and *agonothetai* on occasion allowed individuals who, under normal circumstances, would not be associated with athletic training, including slaves, women and visiting foreigners, to anoint themselves with oil that these officials had freely provided. In some instances this act of anointing took place in the *gymnasion* but more often in the baths. A late Hellenistic decree from Eretria in honor of Elpinikos Nicomachou begins with an account of his benefactions during his tenure as gymnasiarch, including the provision of high quality oil paid by his Elpinikos' personal funds.¹³¹ Furthermore, Elpinikos provided oil during the festival of the Artemiseia, again paid exclusively by him, not only for the citizens but also for all the visiting guests (ξένοις) who joined the festivities. According to the decree, some of these visitors who joined the sacrifices were Romans, so one can assume that they also benefitted from Elpinikos' copious provision of oil.¹³²

The decree from Eretria suggests that Elpinikos' generosity extended to the non-citizens, presumably of free status, that were long-term residents of the city as well as those that visited the city on the occasion of the Artemiseia festival. Such inclusiveness was common practice across the Greek-speaking world, as demonstrated by honorary decrees and other documents related to the *gymnasion* and agonistic festivals from numerous cities. Publicly displayed documents dealing with such matters regularly point out with precision which of the non-citizen groups were to receive, in exceptional circumstances, the right to use the oil provided by benefactors. It appears that in some, if not most, cases the decision to include or exclude particular groups from the *aleimma* in *gymnasia*, games and baths was taken by the donor who paid for the oil. Nevertheless, even though an individual benefactor's view weighed significantly in such matters, the arrangement was presented in the honorary decrees as binding for the entire community. In this sense, decisions regarding the provision and access to oil had wider implications as they created a *de facto* situation on the ground

that contributed to the articulation and representation of a complex network of meanings and identities.

An overview of arrangements regarding provision of oil to foreigners and other subaltern groups as they appear in extant, mostly honorary, documents confirms this inference. The late second-century BCE foundation of Kritolaos in Aegiale of Amorgos established games, as pointed out in section 3, that were open only to citizens of Aegiale.¹³³ Nevertheless, non-citizens were also drawn to the festival and the local *gymnasion* culture: among the activities underwritten by the foundation was a feast, which comprised the distribution of *alleima*, to citizens who attended the festival but also to *paroikoi* and visiting foreigners, including Romans (ll. 55–59). The terms of the foundation also stipulated (ll. 59–60), that the feast was to be conducted in the local *gymnasion*.

Similarly, in Gytheion during the Imperial period Phaenia Aromation, a lady belonging to the group of Roman *negotiarii* resident in the city, established a foundation of 8,000 denarii with the objective of supplying oil to the citizens of Gytheion and resident foreigners in perpetuity (IG V.1.1208, 10–15). The terms of the foundation also specify that the oil was to be used in the *gymnasion* and the city (ll. 16–17; 43), the latter presumably alluding to civic festivals. As already pointed out in section 3, Phaenia also provided for the use of oil by slaves for six days during the year on specific festival occasions (ll. 38–40).¹³⁴ One of the most intriguing aspects of this document is the convoluted legal procedure that was to be activated in case the magistrates of Gytheion, to whom the implementation of the terms of the foundation was entrusted, failed to perform their duties (ll. 15–38).¹³⁵ More specifically, the foundation stipulated (ll. 40–41) that no *archon*, *synedros* or *gymnasiarchos* shall disrespect the donor's wish to provide oil to slaves, a clause that clearly suggests that Phaenia believed that certain officials were in disagreement with that particular clause, presumably because of the legal status of slaves, and hence they were inclined to neglect its implementation. In such a contingency the document envisaged the intervention of Spartan authorities, if any negligence was not properly addressed in Gytheion. This section clearly reflects the donor's anxiety that the terms of her foundation might be ignored or altered and her funds directed to another purpose. This seems to have been a frequently occurring practice among Greek cities during the Imperial period, as the proconsular decree from Veroia discussed earlier also suggests. All this highlights the precariousness of the situation: providing oil to slaves created a controlled liminal situation whereby an underprivileged group was invited to participate on a temporary basis to privileges usually reserved for higher-status groups.¹³⁶ By the same token, the fact that slaves were to receive oil only for six days per year was by itself an explicit demarcator of inferior status. Such demarcators were often established whenever underprivileged groups were at the receiving end of benefactions. In one case an *agonothetes* of the Heraia and Nemean games from Argos provided, for the duration of the games, oil in every *gymnasion* and bath in the city for free and slaves, but provided money and banquets only to free individuals.¹³⁷

The intricacies and implications of oil distribution to groups of different statuses can be better observed in cases where extant epigraphic dossiers from a certain city provide more thorough and long-term insights. These case studies suggest a multi-faceted and at times circumstantial approach that, as in the case of Phaenia, took into account the wishes of individual donors. The honorary decrees for A. Aemilius Zosimos from Priene reveal how this all-rounder benefactor, with the blessings of his city, tackled the issue of oil provision.¹³⁸ The honorary inscriptions for Zosimos are notable for highlighting the benefactions of the honoree in a repetitive and hyperbolic way while at the same time providing only a vague background as to the specific occasions during which these benefactions occurred.¹³⁹ In one decree honoring Zosimos for his *gymnasiarchia* of the *neoi*, we hear of his eagerness to please the rightful receivers of oil (τὴν τῶν ἀλιφομένων κοινωνίαν) in the *gymnasion*, an objective that he achieved by making oil available from sunrise to sunset – a stock phrase signifying copious quantities of oil.¹⁴⁰ The implication in this case is that in the course of a normal *gymnasiarchia* Zosimos made the oil available only to those who had the privilege to exercise in his *gymnasion*. The trainees of this *gymnasion* consisted primarily of citizens but in IK *Priene* 69, 43, another honorary decree for Zosimos we also hear of the ἐφηβευκότητας τῶν παροίκων, a group that probably comprised youths from neighboring dependent communities who did not have full citizenship rights but were allowed to join the local *ephebeia*.

IK *Priene* 68 elaborates further on Zosimos' oil distribution practices. One section of the decree deals with Zosimos' distribution of oil to the gymnasial class and members of the citizenry, again from sunrise to nightfall (ll. 57–64). Moreover, during market and ancestral holidays (ἀγοραίοις καὶ πατρίοις ἑορταῖς) scented oil was provided in the *gymnasion* and the local bath. Both of these donations concerned citizen groups of Priene. Further on in the same decree, it is specified that on certain occasions Zosimos made the *aleimma* available to non-citizens as well (ll. 76–91). These occasions are implicitly contrasted to the “market and ancestral holidays,” mentioned in a previous section of the decree, during which anointing oil was available to citizens only. Hence a bath (λουτρόν) whose operation Zosimos financed for a year for the benefit of *ephebes*, the *neoi* and the teachers of the *gymnasion*, on certain holidays admitted also all other citizens, non-citizen residents, foreigners and Romans (ll. 76–80). In the same spirit of inclusiveness, and in order for the city to appear more distinguished to foreign visitors, Zosimos made oil available to everyone, i.e. including non-citizens and visitors, in a city bath (βαλανεῖον). The occasion that afforded Zosimos the opportunity to provide these benefactions must have been an interstate festival that attracted a significant number of out-of-town visitors. IK *Priene* 69, 76–78 also refers to Zosimos providing free access to citizens and visiting foreigners to a bath stocked with oil and other ointments on the occasion of unnamed festivals. The practice of providing oil to non-citizen groups in select contexts is also attested in Priene during the Imperial period in a fragmentary decree for Dioskourides son of Demeas who

supplied oil for a year to citizens, the *ephebes* recruited among the *paroikoi* and Romans, ostensibly the latter referring to those resident in the city.¹⁴¹ Dispensing oil to resident Romans, on an equal basis to the members of the gymnasial community and citizens was a tacit acknowledgement of the need to integrate, for reasons of political expediency, an influential minority into the civic fabric. The foundation of the Roman Phaenia Aromation discussed above suggests that the co-optation of some Romans residing in Greek cities into the ideology of Greek athletics was successful to a remarkable degree.

In sum, these representative documents reveal crucial facets of the regulatory framework of training and competition facilities. An attempt was clearly made in many Greek cities of the Hellenistic and Imperial periods to define and allocate the use of training facilities and all the privileges associated with them (e.g. provision of anointing oil) with regard to particular classes of citizens and non-citizens, including age-group subdivisions of the citizenry and subaltern group members (e.g. slaves). Moreover, similar blueprints regarding privileges and distributions were legislated in connection with major civic festivals. Discursive negotiation is also evident. The Phaenia foundation, for instance, reveals a fear of administrative inadequacies but also, and perhaps most importantly, of conflicting views within the ruling elite of the community on how funds related to the use of oil, and by extension athletics, shall be used as well as who was qualified to be included in the group of those who “anointed themselves” (*aleifomenoi*). In turn, such concerns suggest an undercurrent of ideological conflict over fundamental social relationships and values, particularly the legal and cultural boundaries of the civic community of Gytheion.

On a wider level, the diverging attitudes intimated in the Phaenia foundation are symptomatic of a deep-rooted interest, and perhaps also uneasiness, over the social and cultural capital generated by sport. Such discursive contestation of the standing and meaning of sport must have been frequent at the civic level, i.e. in addition to the various literary discourses that challenged various orthodoxies on sport. But such conditions are rarely revealed in honorary, legal or civic documents. One should also keep in mind that conditions of discursive conflict were intertwined with, and at times became exacerbated by, the financial and other constraints that cities often faced. Thus the tone of insecurity regarding the accurate implementation of the terms of the Phaenia foundation is also reflective of such considerations. Financial constraints sometimes led to the decision, despite the popularity and cultural significance of sport, to use funds earmarked for oil, festivals and other aspects of the agonistic life of cities for different purposes – the Imperial proconsular decree from Veroia regarding the local *gymnasion* was the product of such financial challenges.

5 Conclusion

Given the popularity of sport and its multifaceted impact, Greek cities and organizing authorities of local games eagerly and habitually legislated on numerous aspects of local athletic training and competition. Laws and other texts of legal import (e.g. decrees and edicts) illustrate the challenges that the

organizers of athletic contests and the overseers of athletic facilities faced. Moreover, sport legislation was intertwined with wider social issues since the Archaic period. In any case, the text of a law or regulation contains only half of the story. The other half is to be found in how the law is implemented, received, negotiated, accepted, neglected or abused. Extant Greek regulations on sport and the evidence for their reception and use articulate the realities and dynamism of athletic practices as well as something of the popularity, excitement and at times ambivalence that accompanied Greek sport. As such, laws open up a valuable vantage point from which to evaluate the wider social and cultural ramifications of sport in the Greek world.

Identity in Greek sport was achieved primarily through a process of exclusion, articulated explicitly in regulations for training facilities, of those deemed unfit to exercise as well as in setting up limited-accessibility competitions that were open only to a community's citizenry or its subdivisions. Cases of such competitions for citizens existed since Classical and Hellenistic Greece, with the Athenian Theseia being one of the best documented examples, and proliferated in the Imperial period. The spread of controlled-eligibility games was related to the willingness of benefactors, civic authorities and sport audiences to incorporate in the regulations governing local games provisions that recognized and rewarded joint victories. Moreover, the mode of commemoration of athletic victories was at times regulated, most commonly through the legal framework of a contest, on the basis of the wishes of a benefactor or through long-held custom. Such conditions rendered the administrative and regulatory framework governing the operation of athletic festivals and facilities a powerful medium for the articulation and dissemination of civic values and ideologies, presented in the guise of sport and festival. By sanctioning joint victories and controlling the visual representation of victory, especially in some cities of Asia Minor during the Imperial period, civic elites were presented with an opportunity to spread the prestige and benefits of athletic victory in *themides* to a wider circle of local dignitaries.

Overall, the widespread practice of regulating athletic practices had far-reaching consequences on how competitive sport was perceived on the micro level as well as on how sport correlated with and negotiated wider social issues. At times civic regulations explicitly articulated status distinctions that have been integrated for centuries into the practice of Greek sport, while on other occasions rules governing the conduct of local games aimed primarily at the complementary objective of spreading the cultural capital emanating from sport to members of particular social groups. Status, however, is not merely legally defined. It is also generated by a myriad of discourses and practices that engage both civic structures and the agency of individuals and social groupings of various affiliations. In addition to institutionalized contests, access to sport facilities was in the Greek world a powerful token of status recognition. Through exceptions and other special provisions, for example, eligibility for training and competition also negotiated and challenged existing identities and boundaries on an occasional or long-term basis, e.g. the special dispensation granted to

slaves in some communities that allowed them to partake occasionally in the activities of the *gymnasion*, or the integration of Romans in the world of gymnasial training through the *ephebeia* since the late Hellenistic period. Exclusion or legitimization of status, in other words, materialized in *gymnasia*, *palaistrai* and *stadia* on a daily basis. This is a theme that will also occupy us, with particular reference to civic agonistic festivals, also in Chapters 5 and 6.

Notes

- 1 Ebert and Siewert 1999; Minon 2007, 38–47.
- 2 Koerner 1989; Papakonstantinou 2008, 121–123.
- 3 5.20.2.
- 4 5.49.1.
- 5 Attendance of women in the Olympic games, Paus. 5.6.7–8. Olympic *ekecheiria*, Paus. 5.20.1; Plut. *Lyc.* 1.1.
- 6 Lämmer 2010.
- 7 See discussion below and n. 22 for sources.
- 8 For the *nomophylakes* see Paus. 6.24.3.
- 9 E.g. Siewert 2000, 31–37. The need to revise and adapt the regulatory framework of the Olympic games was dictated by the continuing popularity and success of the Olympic festival until the late Imperial period. See Farrington 1997.
- 10 CID 1.3.
- 11 Lämmer 1993; Crowther 2008.
- 12 Paus. 5.24.9–11.
- 13 Paus. 5.24.9.
- 14 Weiler 1991a, 1991b and 2014; Perry 2004.
- 15 Paus. 6.4.3.
- 16 Papakonstantinou 2007, 101–110.
- 17 Paus. 5.21.2–8.
- 18 Fines: Paus. 5.21.2–8; 5.21.16–17; 6.6.5–6; flogging: Crowther and Frass 1998; expulsion from the games: Paus. 5.21.12–14.
- 19 *IvO* 2.
- 20 Paus. 6.3.7; Crowther 2004, 71–81.
- 21 Paus. 5.21.5; Plut. *Mor.* 850b.
- 22 Thuc. 5.49.1–50.4; Xen. *Hell.* 3.2.21.
- 23 Roy 1998, 362.
- 24 Siewert 1981 and 2005, 93–96; Minon 2007, 108 and 112.
- 25 Baitinger and Eder 2001.
- 26 Hom. *Il.* 23, 700–739.
- 27 *IG* II².2311. See also Themis 2015.
- 28 *Pyth.* 8, 86–87; see also Pind. *Ol.* 8, 68–69. For sport losers in epinician see Miller 2018.
- 29 For a survey of the evidence for “sacred” and joint victories see Crowther 2000. See also Robert 1930, 27–29; Papakonstantinou 2015b and 2016a.
- 30 *IvO* 54. Quotation from l. 22. For Tiberius Claudius Rufus see Chapter 3.1 and Merkelbach 1974; Poliakoff, 1987, 127–128.
- 31 Polyb. 29.8.9; Paus. 8.40.3–5.
- 32 *P.Oxy.* 5209. *Editio princeps* in Henry et al. 2014, 163–167.
- 33 For a discussion of *P.Oxy.* 5209 and other instances of match-fixing in Greek sport see Papakonstantinou 2016a; Marshall 2018.

- 34 The term surplus-value to denote victories won in exceptional circumstances was coined by Pleket in his 1975 seminal article – see especially p. 79. See also Young 1996.
- 35 See Robert 1968, 198–201.
- 36 Te Riele 1964, 186–187 with the comments by Robert and Robert 1965, 111.
- 37 *IG* XIV.1102, 13–14 = Moretti 1953 no. 79.
- 38 The number of attested joint or “sacred” victories is still a small minority, however, compared to the recorded instances of sole victories during the same period.
- 39 *TAM* II.301, Xanthos, second/third centuries CE; *TAM* II.677, Kandyanda, Roman period; Anderson 1913, no. 23.
- 40 For the possibility that “sacred” victories were more readily declared after the second century CE see Moretti 1953, 225 in connection with the honorary inscription for M. Aurelius Hermagoras who recorded 29 such victories, including one in the Olympic games.
- 41 *I.Didyma* 194 = Robert 1930, 28–29; Moretti 1953, no. 85. For participation and performance as tokens of distinction see also Golden 2008, 38–39.
- 42 *SIG* 740. Cf. φιλονεικῶς in Buckler and Robinson 1932, no. 78.
- 43 *MAMA* 4.132; *MAMA* 4.154; *MAMA* 6.73; Heberdey and Kalinka 1897, no. 67; Anderson 1913, no. 23; Wiegand 1904, 326; *TAM* 5.2.1013; *TAM* 5.2.1015. For additional references see Robert 1960, 356–358.
- 44 Robert 1960, 351.
- 45 For *Toalis* see Hall and Milner 1994, no. 7, 17–8. Cf. Hall and Milner 1994, no. 13 for an *hieronikes paradoxos*.
- 46 Cf. the case of M. Aurelius Pappos from Myra (*TAM* 2.586, Tlos, Imperial period) who was recorded as Pythian and Olympic victor but not *hieronikes* and hence his victories were achieved in local contests. See the comments in Reitzenstein 2014, no. 7. See also *IK Tralleis* 75 and *I.Magnesia* 162 for Epigonos of Tralleis, second century CE, who was four times Olympic victor, probably in the Olympic games of his native city (Moretti 1957, nos. 1007–1010).
- 47 See e.g. for the regulations of the Herakleia in Marathon *IG* II².2311; Vanderpool 1984. For the Athenian *athlothetai* see Nagy 1978.
- 48 Rougemont 1973.
- 49 *Gym.* 45.
- 50 See Crowther 1989; and Frisch 1988 and Crowther 2010, 196 for a discussion of age-classes in the Sebasta. For updated discussions of the Sebasta on the basis of the new inscriptional evidence see the studies by De Martino and Di Nanni Durante, n. 55.
- 51 *SEG* 60.1308. For, often contradictory, views on chronology and the placement of the various games in the calendar according to Hadrian’s letters see Petzl and Schwertheim 2006; Gouw 2008; Schmidt 2009; Strasser 2010 and 2016; Shear 2012. Though important, the chronology of contests and their positioning in a four-year calendar is only tangential to my main concerns in the present discussion. I intend to discuss further the second-century CE four-year calendar of games on a future occasion.
- 52 *IvO* 56, 12–15.
- 53 *IvO* 56, 23–25.
- 54 *IvO* 56, 25–28.
- 55 *IGI Napoli* I nos. 56 and 66; Moretti 1957 no. 72; *SEG* 14.602. Any discussion on the Sebastan games should now be revised and complemented by the publication of new evidence, especially victors’ lists of the late first century CE. See Miranda De Martino 2007, 2010, 2013, 2014, 2016, 2017; Di Nanni Durante 2007–2008 and 2017.
- 56 Miranda De Martino 2014, no. 2, col. II (p. 1178), ll. 24–25 and her discussion on p. 1179. For the date see Miranda De Martino 2017.

- 57 Miranda De Martino 2014, no. 2, col. I (p. 1176), l. 24. See also Miranda De Martino 2017 with an updated discussion of the same inscription.
- 58 See Miranda De Martino 2016, 392–393.
- 59 IK *Anazarbos* 25, 7–9.
- 60 Dyck 2000b, 21.
- 61 Probably a reference to an *akoniti* (uncontested) victory. See IK *Side* II.132 and further discussion by Strasser 2003.
- 62 Leodinaia: IG V.1.19 and possibly IG V.1.20, both dated to the reign of Trajan. Demostheneia: Wörrle 1988.
- 63 Themos 2015.
- 64 SEG 6.449 = SEG 39.1418. See Gardiner 1929; Golden 2008, 42–43.
- 65 For the Theseia see IG II².956–958; for age-groups in the Theseia see Kennell 1999.
- 66 Tribes (φυλή), e.g. IG II².956, 49; 51; 56; 59. IG II².957, 27; 28; 33. *Ephebeia*, IG II².956, 64. Training in a particular *palaistra*, IG II².956, 61–62; IG II².957, 46–47. Training in a particular *gymnasion*, IG II².956, 67; IG II².957, 51.
- 67 Members of the elite infantry (ἐπιλεκτοι), IG II².956, 12–13; IG II².957, 26. Tribal leaders (*phylarchs*), IG II².956, 78–79; 80. Cavalrymen (*hippeis*) IG II².956, 83; 84–85; 86; IG II².957, 32.
- 68 Veroia, Gauthier and Hatzopoulos 1993, B, 45–71; Ephesos, IK *Ephesos* 1101, 180–160 BCE; Chios, CIG 2214.
- 69 I will discuss the latter point in section 4 of the present chapter in connection with the regulatory framework governing the operation of athletic facilities. For the *ephebeia* during the Hellenistic period see now the extensive survey by Chankowski 2010.
- 70 Zuiderhoek 2009; Aneziri 2014.
- 71 IG XII.7.515, 83–84, late second century BCE. For this document and the foundation of Kritolaos see Laum 1914, no. 50; Gauthier 1980; Helms 2003; Sosin 2014, 57–69.
- 72 Wörrle 1988, 23–24 and 46. The Demostheneia expanded during the third century CE and allowed the participation of citizens of other communities in the athletic segment of the festival, see Hall and Milner 1994, no. 20.
- 73 Augousteia, Jüthner 1902; Meleagria, Milner 1991.
- 74 Jüthner 1902, no. 2.
- 75 Nollé 1988, especially 129–133.
- 76 Heberdey and Wilhelm 1896, nos. 236 and 237.
- 77 On *themides* during the Imperial period see also Farrington 2008.
- 78 Hagel and Tomaschitz 1998, nos. 3, 4, 5, 6 (Aspendos), 7, 9, 10, 11, 12 (Anemourion), 13, 16, 31, 32.
- 79 See e.g. also the well-documented case of Termessos, a city of numerous games during the Imperial period, where all 64 known victors were, or can reasonably be presumed to be, citizens of the host city. See TAM 3.I: 41, 141–153, 155–162, 164–184, 186–194, 196, 199, 202, 203, 205, 206, 208–210; EFT I.3; II.1; IV, 22–28. See also Heberdey 1929.
- 80 Farrington 2008, 245–246.
- 81 Milner 1991, no. 5, c. 180 CE.
- 82 Mousaios, Milner 1991, no. 6, c. 190 CE; Simonides, Milner 1991, no. 8, soon after 212 CE.
- 83 Exceptions included Xenophon of Korinth, Pind. *Ol.* 13, 29–31. Aurelius Septimius Irinaios, an athlete active during the first quarter of the third century CE (Moretti 1953, no. 85) and possibly the famous Theogenes of Thasos (Moretti 1953, no. 21). There are also some rare examples of combinations of victories in athletic and literary contests, e.g. Alexander Karpos from Patara who in the late second century

- CE won in two iterations of local games, the boys' wrestling and the *enkomion* contest. See Lepke 2015, no. 2.
- 84 "Leading class", Milner 1991, no. 1; "most honorable", Milner 1991, nos. 5, 6, 8 and 9; "first rank in the city" Milner 1991, nos. 3 and 4.
- 85 IK Assos 26, 37 CE; IGR 3.409, Pogle, Imperial period; MAMA 8.513, Aphrodisias, early third century CE; *FdXanth* 7.71, Xanthos, after 68 CE. Surplus-value designations also applied to elite women, e.g. πρώτη γυναικῶν IK Assos 16, early Imperial; IK Priene 305, first century BCE/first century CE. For the use of athletic discourse and symbols in the representation of women see also Chapter 6.2.
- 86 Milner 1991, no. 7.
- 87 Milner 1991, no. 10.
- 88 Milner 1991, nos. 13 and 14, with p. 41 for a family stemma.
- 89 For the regulatory framework as well as other aspects of the operation of *gymnasia*, especially during the Hellenistic and Imperial periods, see also Kah and Scholz 2004; Scholz and Wiegandt 2015; Curty 2015.
- 90 For a survey of the evidence for south Italian and Sicilian cities see Cordiano 1997.
- 91 Kennell 2010a.
- 92 Gauthier and Hatzopoulos 1993, with extensive commentary.
- 93 Lazaridou 2015.
- 94 Nigdelis and Souris 2005.
- 95 For slaves in Greek sport see; Crowther 1992; Golden 2008, 40–67; Mann 2014.
- 96 For the foundation of Phaenias Aromatation see IG V.1.1208, first century CE and the discussion later in the present section. For a discussion of the temporary suspension, during some civic agonistic festivals, of the restrictions imposed on women and slaves regarding their participation in the activities of *gymnasia* see Chapter 6.1c.
- 97 E.g. IC IV.72.I, 41–42; III, 22; V, 53; VI, 36; VII, 41.
- 98 For the Gortynian *dromeis* see also Willetts 1955, 12 and 1976, 184; Tzifopoulos 1998.
- 99 Multiple *gymnasia* are attested in numerous other small or large cities during the Imperial period, e.g. IK Tralleis 75, first-second centuries CE, three *gymnasia*; TAM V.2, 968, Thyateira, Imperial period, three *gymnasia*. See also IK Ephesos 488; I. Didyma 2371 and 301, all of the Imperial period, for gymnasiarchs πάντων τῶν γυμνασίων.
- 100 *Gymnasia* for *neoi*, IK Iasos nos. 122; 123; 248; 250; 255; for the elderly, IK Iasos nos. 87; 245; 246; 250.
- 101 MDAl(A) 32 (1907) 321, 50, Pergamon, early Imperial, five *gymnasia*; MDAl(A) 24 (1899) 178, 30, Pergamon, early Imperial, six *gymnasia*; Habicht 1969, no. 37, Pergamon, early second century CE, seven *gymnasia*.
- 102 MDAl(A) 32 (1907) 257.8, 49, Pergamon, 75–50 BCE, gymnasiarch νέων καὶ πρεσβυτέρων; I.Pergamon II.467, Imperial, *gymnasion* of citizen boys.
- 103 See e.g. NSER no. 21, Rhodes, second–first century BCE, gymnasiarch πρεσβυτέρων; Wörle 2016, no. 4, Limyra, early Imperial, gymnasiarch νέων καὶ γερόντων; I. Didyma 262, early Imperial, gymnasiarch νέων and πατέρων; MDAl(A) 36 (1911) 294, no. 4 Apollonia ad Rhyndacum, 40/41 CE, gymnasiarch of the youths and elderly; IK Perge 56 East II.1, 5, late first century CE, gymnasiarch for boys, youths and elderly; SEG 2.696 Attaleia, second century CE, gymnasiarch for elderly, youths and boys; TAM V.2.1367 = IK Magnesia on Sipylus 34, gymnasiarch for boys, youths and elderly.
- 104 Vitale 2014 with references to earlier scholarship.
- 105 Gauthier and Hatzopoulos 1993, B, 13–15, Veroia; Lazaridou 2015, 60–61, Amphipolis.
- 106 MDAl(A) 32 (1907) 321, 50, early Imperial, is an example from Pergamon.

- 107 OGIS 764, 5, late Hellenistic; *I.Pergamon* II 463, possibly first century CE; *MDAI (A)* 33 (1908) 396, 15; *MDAI(A)* 35 (1910) 416, 8. See also Vitale 2014, 176.
- 108 Ptolemaion *gymnasion*, *IK Iasos* 98, 36; Antiocheion *gymnasion*, *IK Iasos* 93, 22.
- 109 *IK Ephesos* 661, mid second century CE; Thyateira, *TAM* V.2.968. The inscription from Thyateira has been interpreted by Vitale 2014, 175 as referring to a sequence of events during the third installment of which the honoree served as gymnasiarch.
- 110 *I.Didyma* 259, 41/40 BCE.
- 111 Construction of terrace and other refurbishments in the *gymnasion* νέων in Pergamon *MDAI(A)* 32 (1907) 257, no. 8, col. I, 34–41, 75–50 CE; banquet in the *gymnasion* νέων in Pergamon, *MDAI(A)* 29 (1904) 152.1, 17–18, 75–50 BCE; construction of *stoa*, *I.Pergamon* II.461, first or early second century CE; dedication of oil urn, *I.Pergamon* II.466, reign of Trajan. Cf. also *SEG* 49.1540, 36–38, possibly from Apollonia on the Meander, between 170–159 BCE, which probably refers to erecting a stele in the *gymnasion* of the *neoi*; *MDAI(A)* 32 (1907) 256, no. 6, Pergamon, 75–50 BCE, most likely referring to the dedication of a statue in the *gymnasion* of the *neoi*; *IK Mylasa* 137, Hellenistic, which probably refers to construction or supplies for the *gymnasion* of the *neoi*.
- 112 ἐπεὶ τοῦ τῶν νέων γυμνασίου κατεφθαρμένου τελείως γενόμενος καθάπερ εἴ τις δεῦτερος κτίστης, *MDAI(A)* 32 (1907) 257, no. 8, col. II, 61–63, 75–50 BCE.
- 113 Kennell 2013, 232.
- 114 Engelmann 2012, no. 1, early second century CE. For gymnasiarchs of all ages cf. also from Patara Bönisch and Lepke 2013, nos. 2–3, second century CE; Lepke, Schuler and Zimmermann 2015, nos. 6–7, both after 126 CE.
- 115 Engelmann 2012, no. 11, first third of second century CE.
- 116 OGIS 2.479, first or second century CE. Although not specified, perhaps in this case slaves and women were allowed to partake in the activities of the *gymnasion* on special occasions, cf. the examples from Stratonikeia, Chapter 6.1b.
- 117 *IK Smyrna* II.2, p. 354, VI, first century CE; Teos, *CIG* 3085.
- 118 *IK Iasos* 87 and 121, possibly late Hellenistic.
- 119 Xen. [*Ath.pol.*] 1.10–11. For interaction of groups of diverse social and legal statuses in Classical Athens and its wider implications see Vlassopoulos 2007; Gottesman 2014. Cf. also Forsdyke 2012 for a wider Greek perspective.
- 120 Veroia: Hatzopoulos and Gauthier 1993, B, 26–28; Athens, Aeschin. 1.138; *Plut. Sol.* 1.3; see also Kyle 1984.
- 121 See *IG* VII.1777, first century CE and the discussion of the same inscription in Chapter 6.1a.
- 122 Gallazzi and Kramer 2014, no. 4.
- 123 *Ephebeia* certificate of Dionysios senior, Gallazzi and Kramer 2014, no. 1; birth certificate of Dionysios junior, Gallazzi and Kramer 2014, no. 2; registration of Dionysios junior in the tribe, Gallazzi and Kramer 2014, no. 3.
- 124 Gymnasiarchs for the citizens, *I.Didyma* 253 and 258, Imperial; *SEG* 4.425, Miletus, second or third century CE; *I.Pergamon* II.467, Imperial, *gymnasion* of citizen boys; *IGR* 3.833,a-b, Iotape, mid-second century CE.
- 125 Dated to the first quarter of the first century BCE.
- 126 *MDAI(A)* 35 (1910) 422, 11.
- 127 References in *MDAI(A)* 35 (1910), 424. In late Hellenistic Chalkis (*IG* XII.9.952 and Knoepfler 1979), victor lists for the local Herakleia and Hermaia games indicate that youths originating from other Greek cities as well as Romans joined the local *ephebeia* and trained in the *gymnasion*.
- 128 “Foreigners”, *SEG* 43.145, 30; *SEG* 51.472, 50. “Foreigners and Romans”, *SEG* 55.511, 2. For the *ephebeia* of Messene see Kennell 2010b. For athletics and victory

commemoration in Hellenistic and early Imperial Messene see Papakonstantinou 2018.

129 SEG 47.388.

130 Diehl and Cousin 1889 no. 4, 19–21, Themisonion, late second century BCE; IK *Sestos* 1, 73–74, 133–120 BCE, for foreigners (*xenoi*) sharing in the anointing oil. But in ll. 84–85 the same inscription distinguishes between all those who receive *aleimma* and the *xenoi* who participate in public affairs, thus indicating the presence of a non-citizen minority which did not, because of age or other reasons, in normal circumstances partake of the iconic gymnasial practice of anointing.

131 IG XII.9.234, c. 100 BCE.

132 Cf. a fragmentary inscription from Mylasa (IK *Mylasa* 413, 7–8) which specifies that during civic festivals *aleimma* was provided to citizens, *metoikoi* and *xenoi*.

133 IG XII.7.515.

134 For other examples of provision of anointing oil to slaves see Kennell 2001, 122, n. 16.

135 For the legal procedure envisaged in Phaenia's foundation see Harter-Uibopuu 2004.

136 For more examples of conditions of liminality in Greek festivals see Chapter 6.1c.

137 IG IV.597, Argos, Imperial period.

138 IK *Priene* 68–70, after 84 BCE.

139 See Graf 2010, 78, for the tendency of honorary decrees from Priene to focus on the generosity of the honoree at the expense of providing details on the religious context of the festival.

140 IK *Priene* 70, 11–15. Cf. OGIS 2.479, 10, Dorylaion, first-second century CE, ἀρχομένης ἡμέρας ἕως νυκτός.

141 IK *Priene* 41, 7–8.

Bodies, life-narratives and civic service

Throughout its long history, Greek sport was first and foremost an embodied gendered performance. The practice of athletic nudity for male athletes, though not an original feature of early Greek athletics, eventually came to be recognized as a hallmark of Greek sport. The identification of the nude body with athletics was so strong that by the Roman imperial period those trained in a *gymnasion* were designated as those applying olive oil on their bodies, i.e. engaging in an act of bodily protection that presumed nudity. The conspicuous display of, largely idealized, athletic bodies in statuary accompanied with honorary inscriptions magnified, on the visual and discursive level, the athletic body and put it center stage in the cityscape of Greek communities. If the honorary inscriptions acted partly as invocations and thus re-enactments of athletic victories and careers, the visually striking statues of athletic bodies reminded to viewers the nexus of physical and character traits intimated by the image of a well-trained and victorious body.

Corporeal functions were in the Greek world – and still are today – a constant source of affective outcomes, most prominently pleasure and suffering. These visceral reactions largely explain the popularity – in antiquity, as well as in modern times – of sport and other bodily performances. The pleasurable agonies of sporting activity, including the euphoria of victory, the thrill of overcoming the odds or even the self-fulfillment felt at the end of a physically demanding training routine were and still are major motives for engaging with sport at the amateur or professional level. Yet in the ancient world the discourse of bodily performance for athletes performed a partial process of de-pleasuring of athletic practices, i.e. it elided in public representation almost all references to the pleasures typical of an athletic performance. Instead, representations of the athletic body emphasized physical toil and suffering, which were considered a prerequisite not merely for victory but most importantly for the construction of an idealized and comely physique as well as for the forging of dominant masculinities. The athletic body was therefore suffused with attributes such as strength, energy, endurance and virtue, which were expected and, if we believe the honorary documents, exhibited not merely by successful athletes but also by competent and generous public figures and benefactors. It was this affinity of bodily and character qualities, it is argued in the ensuing

sections, that encouraged so many civic elites to integrate their own personal athletic achievements into the wider narratives of civic service as well to sponsor athletic activities in *gymnasias* and agonistic festivals.

I Embodied performances

At the end of the second century BCE visitors at the oracle at Klaros in western Asia Minor would have been confronted with a series of honorary monuments celebrating the life and achievements of prominent local men. One of the most spectacular of these monuments was dedicated by Polemaios from neighboring Kolophon. Located at an advantageous position at the beginning of the Sacred Way leading up to the Apollo sanctuary, the monument consisted of an honorary decree inscribed on a statue base that supported a gigantic (6 meter high) column with a bronze statue of the honoree on top. As I have already pointed out in connection with commemoration of victories in local games (Chapter 4), such honorific monuments, of which the one for Polemaios is a supreme exponent, were a virtual consecration and concretization of inequality between the honoree and the audience. In such instances a materially imposing monument was almost always accompanied by a rhetorically elaborate decree or other honorific text. In the case of Polemaios the inscribed text, of which 275 lines still survive in five columns, adopts a laudatory discourse comparable to other honorific inscriptions: Polemaios was a local notable that offered his services unstintingly to the benefit of his native city in a checkered historical period of local military conflicts and increasing infiltration of Roman interests in the region.¹ The honorary inscription itself is a prime and elaborate example of two well-documented narrative construction techniques of the Hellenistic and Imperial periods, namely the narrativization of the self and the discursive performance of multiple personae. These literary techniques consisted of detailed sequences, shrouded in a eulogistic and often heroic tone, of role enactment with particular emphasis on the self-actualization and the major achievements of the honoree from childhood to adulthood. In these epigraphic narratives particular emphasis was paid to well-marked and culturally embedded transition points that signaled the embodiment of a new public persona (e.g. *ephebeia* cadet; civic magistrate).

The Polemaios decree, surely at the instigation of honoree himself and his family, devotes the best part of column I to the formative years of Polemaios' life, especially his studies and engagement with sport. Since joining the *ephebeia*, Polemaios frequented the local *gymnasion* where he trained his body with physical exercises and attended lectures that nourished his intellect.² Polemaios also won in "sacred games" – obviously not in any of the famous ones in mainland Greece, otherwise the decree would have noted such an achievement. His victories were celebrated publicly in Kolophon with a parade during which Polemaios, wearing his victory crowns, rode a chariot and then proceeded to offer sacrifices and treat the spectators with wine.³ This homecoming *eiselas* – literally the presentation of his victory crowns to the community – was an

essential stage in the process of integrating his athletic victories into the community's collective civic consciousness. The decree then refers to Polemaios' years as a student in Rhodes and Smyrna and describes in detail his numerous benefactions and acts of civic service, especially his embassies to the Roman senate and other key power players in the region.⁴

The elaborately crafted narrative of Polemaios's life and achievements combined elements of Polemaios' athletic and civic pursuits that were subjected to the public gaze and communal judgment of his community. This blueprint of representation was very popular with ruling elites of the Hellenistic and Imperial periods, mainly because of its flexibility that allowed the honoree to mold his accomplishments in keeping with elite perceptions and ideologies on sport, political power, material wealth and gender identities. At the same time, this narrative construction strategy was also elastic enough to take into consideration communal values and concerns. At the end, through an epigraphically represented narrative of the self the honoree became a "shared self" that invited audiences to participate in perpetuity, through their encounters with the monuments bearing the life-narrative, to a re-performance and re-assertion of his achievements, elite status and masculinity.⁵

Polemaios' monument and narrative of the self stands in a long tradition of bodily and sporting masculinities in the Greek world. Indeed the perceptions and representations of the male body were since the Archaic period integral in the process of articulating and negotiating normative and deviant masculinities. By masculinity I mean all the explicit or latent qualities that make a person be perceived as a man. Similar to any other identity, a gender identity is both self-reflective and publicly performed. In other words, a person perceives himself/herself as belonging to one or more gender identities and then acts accordingly. How his/her social environment reacts in turn further negotiates how the gender identity is realized by the person involved and the community at large. In their totality, perceptions and representations of masculine identity underscore or undermine central social ideals of what it means to be a man, which in the case of the ancient world revolved primarily around social expectations of military contribution, fatherhood and civic service. The degree to which a person who was perceived as a man measured up to these and other social conventions of manliness largely determined the degree of that person's masculinity. Masculinity was, in other words, in the eye of the beholder, i.e. it is likely that different persons or even different groups would, in certain circumstances, evaluate degrees of masculinity differently. It also figures that since embedded social conventions on war, family and politics changed over time, so did ideals of masculinity. Masculinity therefore had, and continues to have, a historical dimension.

Somatic images and references to bodily comportment can give clues as to one's gender identity, physical strength, daily activities and even social status. In the Greek context, literary discourses and images that promoted an idealized body often associated that person's body with traits of hegemonic or exemplary masculinity, i.e. the attributes that a righteous and virtuous Greek male should

possess.⁶ Bodies, in an ideological and physical sense, constitute themselves at the intersection of three dimensions: institutions, discourses, and corporeality.⁷ Multiple identities of temporary prominence, e.g. regarding age, gender, legal status, are constantly inscribed and negotiated on publicly exposed bodies. Even though we can trace only very limited aspects of the physical, i.e. sensory, corporeality of ancient athletic bodies, we are fairly well informed regarding discourses and the institutional contexts within which athletic and other bodies, e.g. those of public figures, were exposed to the public gaze.

Equally importantly, in the ancient world it was widely believed that the body was a reflection of one's character. The earliest explicit articulation of the physical body-character binary is to be found in the Homeric epics – the deformed, hunchback body of lowly Thersites who dared to speak out of turn against the Achaean leaders was starkly contrasted to the muscular, trained and athletically able body of valorous and righteous Odysseus, the noble who physically punished Thersites for his transgression.⁸ It is also noteworthy that Greeks in the Classical period often perceived of their cultural opposition to eastern peoples in bodily terms, an example of this practice being Agesilaos of Sparta who, during his campaign in Asia Minor in the early fourth century BCE, displayed and subjected to ridicule the naked untrained bodies of Persian prisoners of war for being white, delicate, effeminate (literally being brought up in the shade, *skia-trafia*, which incidentally was the opposite of what an athletically trained body was supposed to be) and therefore worthless.⁹

The athletic body, because of its multiple exposures to the social gaze, was the most conspicuous conduit for the display of embodied identities. Multiple meanings were generated, negotiated and inscribed on the athletic body, a process intimately connected to the internalization of social roles and their transfiguration into social agency. For Greeks of all genders, age-groups and social statuses identities were socially and culturally performed in various contexts and venues – the battlefield, the *agora*, the stadium or the household, to name just a few. Since sport was a consummate public performative and competitive process, the athletic body was ideally positioned to articulate not merely physical strength and athletic skill but also a host of other masculine qualities and values. Meanings and identities generated by sport were literally evinced on bodies, through bodies and between bodies.¹⁰ The athletic body thus became a powerful and complex cultural symbol, as suggested also by the fact that even mythical figures (e.g. Herakles) are depicted acting and appearing as athletes while performing deeds of heroism.¹¹ In the remainder of this chapter I will look at how the athletic body came to articulate normative or deviant masculinities, especially in connection with prevailing notions of civic values and service. I will look in more detail at two case studies: a) representations of the athletic body in epinician poetry and literature from Classical Athens and b) discourses of civic service and bodily culture in athletic honorary decrees of the Hellenistic and Imperial periods.

2 The athletic body in epinician poetry

There is little doubt that Greek literary and artistic representations of the athletic body were largely idealized.¹² This idealization was publicly instantiated through diverse genres of victory commemoration and monumentalization, especially epinician poetry and statuary. Epinician poets, especially Pindar, presented the athletic body as fully abled, beautiful to behold and blessed with an inbred athletic skill.¹³ Bodies of athletic victors were subjected to training exertion in order to reach perfection and achieve the consummate prize, a victory in one of the interstate games. For instance, referring to the victory of Alkimedon of Aigina in the boys' wrestling in the Olympic games of 460 BCE, Pindar declares that he "was beautiful to behold, in action he did not discredit his looks, and by winning in the wrestling match he proclaimed long-oared Aigina as his fatherland."¹⁴ Similarly, Hagesidamos of Epizephyrian Lokroi, Olympic champion in boys' boxing in 476 BCE, was praised in exuberant terms for his beauty and strength: "I have praised the lovely son of Archestratos whom I saw winning with the strength of his hand by the Olympic altar at that time, beautiful in form and imbued with a youthful loveliness."¹⁵ An even more evocative example is provided in Pindar's *Olympian* 9, written for Epharmostos of Opus, Olympic victor in men's wrestling in 468 BCE. The poet introduces him by providing details of his victories in younger age-groups in local games, culminating with his Olympic triumph and victory lap while the spectators cheered his beauty, youth and athletic achievements.¹⁶

Even on the rare occasions that epinician poets had to acknowledge a less than perfect body – e.g. in the case of Melissos of Thebes, who as Pindar admits was "paltry to look at" – the athlete was compensated with other traditional Greek attributes of manliness including cunning, strength and boldness.¹⁷ Once victory was achieved and the victory ode was performed the athlete was represented as the talk of his town and his body as an articulation of physical strength, beauty, social dominance and sexual potency.¹⁸ In short, according to epinician poets following a major victory the athlete's body became identified with the normative body, a body that is often described by the same poets and other authors as an "adornment" to his homeland.¹⁹ Epinician poets, in other words, subscribed to and elaborated on the widespread notion that the paradigmatic body was a host of numerous prominent character attributes and ultimately articulated the individual's – in this case the athlete's – social standing.

Despite its popularity in the first half of the fifth century the epinician genre lost much of its momentum and appeal after 450 BCE. Nonetheless, the athletic body continued to be idealized by certain literary authors. Xenophon provides a stunning description regarding the effect that the presence of Autolykos of Athens, a young athlete and victor of the *pankration* in the Panathenaic games of 421 BCE, had on the participants of the celebration that allegedly took place shortly after his victory:

A person who took note of the course of events would have come at once to the conclusion that beauty is in its essence something regal, especially when, as in the present case of Autolykos, its possessor joins with it modesty and sobriety. For in the first place, just as the sudden glow of a light at night draws all eyes to itself, so now the beauty of Autolykos compelled everyone to look at him.²⁰

Here, the familiar from epinician poetry topos of physical beauty and sexual allure are combined with certain commendable character traits, such as modesty and sobriety, displayed by the athletic victor. It is worth noting that following this introduction, in the rest of the work handsome Autolykos assumes statuesque proportions as he is presented as a mute spectator of his own victory party.

Similar to portrayals of athletes and their bodies in epinician poetry, the awestruck reaction of some Athenians in the face of Autolykos' beauty in Xenophon's *Symposium* perhaps intimates some of the feelings that athletes, their bodies and their artistic representations, especially in victory statuary, were expected to stir among sport fans. In a reference to contemporary athletic practices artistic renderings of the athletic body almost always depicted the athlete in the nude, i.e. the way athletes trained and competed. Such renderings included both freestanding statues set up at the sites of competition and in the victor's city as well as statues and, as pointed out in Chapter 2, reliefs set up as grave-markers of deceased men. Nudity was also the norm in most vase-painting depictions of athletes.

Yet, as recent scholarship has demonstrated, protocols of male nudity in Greek painting and the plastic arts were more complicated than previously thought.²¹ Besides articulating a largely idealized picture of bodily manliness, artistic renderings of athletic nudity came to signify citizen status or even participation in a certain social group. Moreover, different iconographic conventions appear to have been in operation in different visual media. For instance, Athenian black and red-figure vase iconography depicted a range of activities related to athletic training, competition and victory in a manner that foregrounded, through a decorative – but not empiricist – elaboration of bodily details and the proclamation of the athlete's *kleos*, the self-fashioning of the athlete and his body.²² At the same time Athenian funerary stelai of youths who were identified as athletes in principle evoked the activities of the *gymnasion*.²³ Given the centrality of the *gymnasion* in the context of acculturation/socialization of Athenian youths it is not surprising that by the fourth century BCE athletics was viewed by some intellectuals in Athens (e.g. Isocrates) as part of a nexus of educational practices, inscribed on the body, that were instrumental in the construction of gender and civic identities.²⁴

Two further points in connection with Greek artistic representations of the athletic body need to be made. First, extant material indicates a close association, especially in ancient Athens, between the artistic imagery of youthful

athletes and warriors.²⁵ Indeed, starting in the sixth century BCE, athletics along with war become the two most prominent themes in Athenian funerary commemoration.²⁶ Both sport and war were in the Greek world hierarchical, competitive and reflective of social conditions, including class inequalities. Funerary commemorations of the athletic and warrior body were usually stylized to the extent that some scholars consider them as representations of salient elite roles, i.e. glorified depictions of hallmark cultural activities that largely defined elites as a distinctive social group. Both sets of images, especially those portraying deceased individuals, presented a body that was proportional, strong and visibly, though its nudity, masculine.²⁷

Second, there is an explicit link between visual representations of the male body and descriptions of athletic corporeality in epinician odes during the late Archaic and Classical periods. It is in many ways apparent that all the different media used in the representation of athletic victory (i.e. vase-painting, statuary and literature) were meant to be deployed in conjunction with each other. Yet, due to their striking visibility and their prominent display in civic spaces and panhellenic sanctuaries, statues of athletic victors were especially critical in the process of commemoration of the athlete and his victory. From the perspective of elite athletes who could afford to commission poets and sculptors to immortalize their victories, competition in games, epinician poetry and statuary were repeated performances, in different media, locations and time, of hegemonic masculinity and social dominance. In other words, to a large extent victory poetry and plastic arts articulated and promoted a self-aggrandizing portrayal of upper-class athletic victors.²⁸ Victory poetry and statues jointly visualized for contemporary and future audiences a monumental and victorious athletic body.

Hence even though Greek representations of the athletic body followed certain literary and visual conventions, they were also elaborations of a particular and often partisan set of perceptions on sport and bodily culture that very often originated with the athletes themselves. This process assumed that for every statue or poem eulogizing hegemonic masculinity, viewers and audiences also perceived something of the complexity of conditions that underpinned the physical dominance of few, usually wealthy, athletes. Within the template of Greek gender politics, coalition or subordination – for the latter case one might remember Thersites or the athletes “painfully bitten by their loss” in Pindar – was the condition that many men who never achieved lofty athletic achievements found themselves in.²⁹ Athletes’ bodies were crucial, in a performative and symbolic sense, in engendering social agency and the different configurations of masculinities.

3 Athletes and their bodies in Classical Athens

Greek sport was always popular, yet since the Archaic period it had its share of detractors. In general, we can be confident in asserting that the partisan views of those critical of sport never gained wider appeal. It is, however, not a coincidence that many critics of Greek sport, especially among the ranks of the

literati, focused on what they perceived as excesses of the athletic body to justify their attacks on a popular practice. That was especially so during the Classical period in Athens. Themes of inadequate intellectual skills and military preparedness, common among Archaic critics (Tyrtaios, Xenophanes) also crop up in the writings of authors active in Classical Athens, but often these themes are tied up with arguments of physiognomic nature.³⁰ It is certainly no accident that the increased interest towards deviant aspects of the athletic body displayed by Athenian literary authors and intellectuals coincide with the proliferation of athletic training facilities and the number of opportunities for practicing sport in the city of Athens.³¹ As Isocrates points out in the *Panegyrikos*, Athens was the host city of numerous and admirable festivals, which afforded athletes the opportunity to exhibit their fine attributes and allowed spectators to see athletes exerting themselves.³² Besides athletic competitions, the same festivals often incorporated in their program other performances, including religious ceremonies, processions and theatrical plays. As in every other corner of the Greek world, in Classical Athens as well sport was integrated into an advanced and multifaceted performance culture that brought greater visibility on athletes and their bodies.

Among Athenian authors, Aristophanes is notable for his parodies of athletic practices for satirical effect.³³ The popularity of his plays must lead us to assume that, burlesque elements aside, at least some of the views articulated in his jokes were shared by some Athenians or, alternatively, that they were so outlandish that were included in his plays purely for rhetorical exaggeration. Be that as it may, the plays of Aristophanes suggest a familiarity of the Athenian public with the practice, history and even technical aspects of sport, no doubt partly the result of the continuous exposure of the same public to an extensive calendar of athletic contests in fifth-century Athens.³⁴ Similar to other authors, at times Aristophanes portrays athletics as a folly unsuitable for a sensible, mature man.³⁵ However, when it comes to the Athenian youth the poet is critical of their “lack of training.”³⁶ This rebuke must be viewed in the context of a familiar theme in Aristophanic comedies, which contrasts the good old days with the degenerate present. Hence compared to the robust, trained ancestors the Athenian youth of Aristophanes’ day are often depicted as unfit weaklings. In a passage from the *Frogs*, a play produced in 405 BCE, Aristophanes provides a vivid description of an untrained Panathenaic torch-racer, described as “hunched” and “pale,” hobbling along the streets of Athens while being physically abused by spectators.³⁷

Such descriptions of out-of-shape athletes were clearly meant to generate a laugh, but are also symptomatic of a wider Athenian discourse on athletic training, eating habits and bodies. Even though many athletes in Classical Athens were thought of as in possession of beautiful bodies, this was not necessarily as a result of rigorous athletic training.³⁸ On the contrary, many Athenian authors seemed to believe that, taken to extremes, systematic sports training could have deleterious effects for an athlete’s body and character. For instance, several authors identify a voracious appetite as a well-known attribute

of athletes. Again in Aristophanes, to eat like a wrestler appears to be synonymous to gluttony.³⁹ Moreover, in the *Autolykos* Euripides singles out the gluttony of athletes as the main reason for their inability to achieve a happy life: athletes are slaves to their jaws and subject to their stomachs.⁴⁰ Similarly, in another play by the same author those who lack wealth and overindulge in physical fitness are addicted to the unbridled nature of their bellies and thus make bad citizens.⁴¹ Achaëus, a tragic poet contemporary to Euripides, associates athletic exercise with overeating and the athletic body with luxury.⁴² Xenophon, Plato and Aristotle also commented on the excesses and dangers of athletic diet. For instance in the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle alludes to the over-consumption of food by top athletes through a reference to Milon, the famous and very successful fifth-century BCE wrestler who was allegedly devouring large quantities of meat on a daily basis.⁴³

Athletic training and dietary practices also receive considerable coverage in Greek medical manuals. In the Hippocratic corpus, a collection of medical treatises written by various authors but attributed to Hippocrates, diet and exercise are two important cornerstones of healing. References to athletes and athletic practices are often used as case studies to elucidate techniques of diagnosis and cure.⁴⁴ Furthermore, medical authors often reveal a preoccupation with the exaggerations of athletic diet, especially the overconsumption of meat.⁴⁵ This state of affairs, in conjunction with overspecialization in training, results, according to medical and other authors, in the physical disfigurement of the athletic body.⁴⁶ Moreover, according to Plato athletic diet and training induces drowsiness and sloth and as a result athletes “sleep their lives away.”⁴⁷ Their habits, therefore, should be forsaken by those who, due to their station in life, need to be active and vigilant.

The persistent arguments, especially among authors active in Athens during the Classical period, regarding the perceived excesses of athletic diet and exercise were perhaps due to the fact that such caricatural depictions of athletes were largely at odds with contemporary Athenian orthodoxies regarding the civic responsibility of citizens to lead an active and fully engaged public life, including in the domain of civic governance. During the Athenian democracy notions of the paradigmatic citizen revolved around the unrealistic principle of continuous, enthusiastic and uninhibited participation of all adult male citizens, from the poorest to the most privileged, in most aspects of the working of the state. Hence in a political culture that valued personal agency in the form of participation in political processes, views of athletes as reclusive and overindulging individuals essentially likened them to the group of inactive, and thus undervalued, citizens. It is well documented that many Athenians during the fifth and fourth centuries BCE did not view favorably their fellow citizens who dodged their civic responsibilities for the sake of a life of privatism, disengagement and self-indulgence.⁴⁸ It is easy to see how this deeply embedded view on civic participation could be exploited to tarnish the image of professional athletes.

Perceptions of athletic gluttony and bodily disfigurement due to excessive training were also partly at odds in Classical Athens with public, often civic-sponsored, representations of male bodily culture.⁴⁹ The *euandria* contest, for instance, was a team event open only to Athenian citizens in the Panathenaic games that focused on bodily fitness and group coordination in the framework of the Athenian democracy.⁵⁰ Contestants were selected, trained and competed – in a contest that has been described by a modern scholar as “a celebration of manhood” – in teams according to their affiliation to one of the ten Athenian tribes that constituted the backbone of Athenian democratic institutions.⁵¹ According to the extant evidence it appears that teams were judged on their performance of a calisthenics routine as well as the physical appearance of their members. In terms of performance – but not necessarily in their ideological overtones – displays of *euandria* might be comparable to public gymnastic and fitness displays attested in some parts of the modern world.⁵² *Euandria* contests are also attested for the Theseia, another major Athenian festival.⁵³ In a number of ways the Athenian *euandria* contests, through which civic authorities promoted and rewarded the performance of youthful physical fitness of Athenians, were the antithesis of the image of the overfed and socially isolated professional athlete that many fifth and fourth-century BCE authors espoused.

4 Athletic bodies, discourses and institutions

Critiques of athletes and their bodily habits resurface in texts of the Hellenistic and Roman imperial period especially, once again, in connection with training and eating practices. There is no denying, however, that similar to Classical Athens such denigrating voices were a minority, as amply documented by the overwhelming bulk of the source material that points towards a soaring popularity of sport and athletes until the third century CE. The expansion of the *gymnasion* culture, especially starting in the Hellenistic period, and the concomitant changes in civic values it brought about, was catalytic in establishing as dominant a discourse of bodily culture that embraced systematic and long-term somatic exertion, in athletics and public life, as a hallmark of a virtuous civic figure. We are, as a result, in possession of numerous narratives of embodied performance, especially for athletes and civic leaders of the Hellenistic and Imperial periods, handed down through literature and inscriptions. Given the state of the evidence in the ensuing section I will provide an outline of the institutional life and discursive representation of the athletic body, emphasizing aspects of sensory experience whenever possible. I will also explore salient aspects of the shared somatic representation between athletes and public figures, as well as aspects of the widespread and embedded notion that athletic training and competition constituted a preparatory stage for a distinguished career in politics and benefaction.

4a *Virtue and pain: constructing the athletic body*

The post-Classical period was in many respects a golden age of Greek sport. Especially during the Roman Imperial period, in cities across Greece and Asia Minor male citizens of all ages had regular, multiple and institutionalized opportunities to practice sport and observe athletic bodies in action. Gendered roles were primarily and publicly embodied. Male citizens, for instance, acted out their masculinity in specific contexts and through public bodily performances e.g. in the *gymnasion* and the stadium as *ephebeia* trainees or athletes, or in a popular assembly and in diplomatic missions as public figures. Given the popularity of sport, the athletic arena was a significant site for shaping and negotiating hegemonic masculinities. In addition to the physical performance of the body, this negotiation was extended to epigraphic discourses and visual representations. Honorary decrees for athletes, often accompanied by flattering sculptural renderings of the honoree, highlighted not only the beauty and strength of the athletic body but also the performative aspects of the engagement of the athlete with his community. Moreover, bodily beauty was clearly perceived as an asset not only in the athletic but also in the civic domain. Even elderly magistrates, many of whom received their early training in the *gymnasion*, were also praised for their bodily comeliness alongside other character attributes and their record of civic service.

We can begin this section by reconnecting with Polemaios of Kolophon whose late second-century BCE monument and honorary inscription are, as I have already pointed out, symptomatic of wider trends in the epigraphic self-fashioning of the image of the paradigmatic athlete and civic benefactor during the post-Classical world. Polemaios' body (σῶμα), discursively displayed to the ancient readers of the decree as part of a spectacular monument set up in Klaros, was a key concept in the elaborately crafted narrative of Polemaios's life, achievements and identities. According to the decree Polemaios considered his bodily beauty an ornament (κόσμον) for his own life and city.⁵⁴ As a young man, it was his commitment to the training of his body in the *gymnasion* and to competition at the games which, in conjunction with his intellectual pursuits, asserted his adherence to dominant civic values. His athletic victories were culminated in public processions in which he displayed his victory crowns, a bodily performance that articulated in reified and theatrical fashion for his fellow-citizens the most salient features (bodily strength, favorable treatment by the gods, generosity) of his athletic achievements and high social standing. Once he became of age and entered public life, his body was entirely disposed to the benefit of his community – “body and soul” as vividly described.⁵⁵ Polemaios' life was thus presented as a bodily performance of normative upbringing and civic service.

Second Sophistic authors expounded on the theme of sport, especially the athlete's body, training and competition. Steeped in the ideological and cultural context of their time, these texts are often polemical in tone and replete with

rhetorical exaggerations.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, and regarding my purposes in the present chapter, the same texts also convey something of the physical beauty culture that must have existed in *gymnasia* and other training facilities across the Greek world. For the individuals involved in athletic training it became essential to propagate their somatic comeliness, endurance and strength in literary and visual media and in accordance with cultural expectations, even if – one suspects – the enfleshed reality did not always perfectly matched up with rhetoric.

For Second Sophistic authors, the stadium and the *gymnasion* was the natural habitat for the idealized manly physique. For Lucian, a spectator at the major games had the opportunity to admire “manly perfection, physical beauty, wonderful condition, mighty skill, irresistible strength, daring, rivalry, indomitable resolution, and inexpressible ardor for victory.”⁵⁷ Indeed, the entire *Anacharsis* presents the strengthening and beautifying of the athletic body, which is equated with fashioning a responsible and efficient male citizen body, as the primary mission of systematic athletic training and competition.⁵⁸ The bodies of those, on the other hand, who did not partake of such sports training were presented as pallid, corpulent and intolerant to the natural elements. These untrained bodies were, in fact, likened to the bodies of women and did not, therefore, conform to notions of dominant masculinity.⁵⁹ In another case, Dio Chrysostom’s description of Melanchomas and Iatrokles also focused on their physical beauty, which was compared to the symmetry of bronze statues, and other virtues that were cultivated through training and competition.⁶⁰ Both of these figures were probably fictitious and hence literary representations of their bodily qualities, i.e. as strong and proportionally muscular, were stereotypes that typified the ideology of athletic and cultural training in the *gymnasia* of first century BCE. It is worth noting that both Iatrokles and Melanchomas were represented as boxers, a group of athletes that were particularly susceptible to attacks by critics of athletics because of their bodily types and training regimes. Dio indeed hints to the existence of athletes that succumbed to “gluttony and sensuality” and hence deviated from the idealized model of Melanchomas.⁶¹

A common feature throughout these literary representations of athletic beauty is its public performance. Melanchomas, Dio asserts, “was seen by practically all mankind. For there was no notable city, and no nation, that he did not visit; and among all alike the same opinion of him prevailed – that they had seen no one more beautiful.”⁶² This perspective suited the top-tier travelling athletes of the Roman world and a similar viewpoint was also attributed by Lucian to spectators. In attempting to answer the question why so many Greeks regularly travelled to the sites of panhellenic sanctuaries and watched the major games so closely and intensely he maintained:

If the Olympia, Isthmia, or Panathenaia were only on now, those object-lessons might have been enough to convince you that our keenness is not thrown away. I cannot make you apprehend the delights of them by description; you should be there sitting in the middle of the spectators,

looking at the men's courage and physical beauty, their marvelous condition, effective skill and invincible strength, their enterprise, their emulation, their unconquerable spirit, and their unwearied pursuit of victory.⁶³

According to these authors, the athlete's comely physique and all the attributes and virtues it embodied acquired its status as a signifier of masculinity through its exposure to the public domain, especially through training and competition. Literature, statues and inscriptions performed a complementary role as they capitalized on the high premium placed, especially during the Imperial period, on the beauty and strength of the Greek athletic body.

Both Lucian and Dio, therefore, present us with accounts of athletics, bodily form and masculinity that were highly stylized, but which also contain echoes of conflicting traditions.⁶⁴ Some of these ambivalent perceptions on sport are further elaborated in the epigraphic record, especially in honorary decrees for athletes but also civic officials. Many of these decrees also assert, often explicitly and emphatically, an association between somatic beauty, character virtues and civic duty. This perception is exemplified in two honorary decrees for athletes from Aphrodisias. The first, dated to the first half of the second century CE and proposed by the federation of athletic guilds, concerns the pankratiast Kallikrates of Diogenes. A turn of phrase encapsulates the intimate link between bodily culture and moral values: Kallikrates, we are told, "having excelled all the ancients in the beauty of his body, was admired for his physique, and, taking care of his soul, he was congratulated on his conduct."⁶⁵ Similarly, in an honorary decree for Aurelius Achilles, an Aphrodisian Olympic victor probably in one of the heavy events, the honoree is singled out because he "has both undertaken the training of the body, and is also most noble in competition, and most dignified in his way of life and his conduct, so that in him all virtue of body and soul is blended."⁶⁶ In both these cases a virtuous life is perceived as embodied in the well-trained athletic body. In these cases corporeal images did not merely signify athletic achievement and all its attendant social implications but were also instrumental in celebrating a prescribed gender pathway that led to the articulation of hegemonic masculinity.

Because many of the athletes were expected to enter public life and enrich their cities with their wealth and connections – a theme that will be discussed more extensively in the ensuing section – bodily beauty and strength eventually came to be associated with civic duty and other activities beyond the realm of athletics. In *Anacharsis* (24; 28; 36) for example, Lucian repeatedly argues that efficiency in war was a concomitant of chronic athletic training. To be sure, this was a somewhat contrived argument: in reality, Greek athletics was never a very good preparation for ancient-style warfare beyond the level of general physical conditioning. Furthermore, the argument in *Anacharsis* makes even less sense in an era of mercenary armies and Roman legions – at the time Lucian wrote there were no notable citizen civic armies in the Greek world. But by anachronistically projecting this discourse to the time of Solon – i.e. a time

when independent Greek city-states were thriving – Lucian links athletics with the safety and good governance of the city as instantiated by the strong physical bodies of individual citizens.

The centrality of bodily culture in the process of self-actualization and the constitution of gendered and social identities of elite men is also substantiated by the fact that the idealizing discourse of the beautiful and strong body is also detected in connection with civic figures and other members of the ruling elite that ostensibly had no immediate or extensive connection with the world of athletics. This is especially so for deceased individuals who were frequently praised in funerary and honorary inscriptions for their corporeal beauty as a means to celebrate a life – even a short one – that conformed to orthodox scripts of bodily performance and masculinity. A consolation decree of 40–42 CE issued by the city of Sparta and dedicated in Epidauros lamented the death of Titus Statilius Lamprias, a native of Epidauros with aristocratic family links in Sparta, Athens and Argos who died at the tender age of ten.⁶⁷ Lamprias was praised because “through his bodily beauty (κάλλει τε σώματος) and the virtues of his soul he transcended the measure of his age” (l. 16). “In matters of education,” the decree goes on, “wisdom, acuity, judgment, and piety towards his parents provided perfect examples of his excellence in everything” (ll. 17–19). The city of Athens also honored Lamprias posthumously with a consolation decree set up in Epidauros.⁶⁸ The honoree is described as a “well-behaved and prudent youth, suffused with moral virtue (*arête*) in the early stages of his life” (ll. 26–27).⁶⁹ In many ways these decrees which lament Lamprias’ unfulfilled promise also employ his paradigmatic body as a reference point to map out an elaborate web of familial connections. It is in this light that we should understand the extravagant, and incommensurate to his real-life achievements, honors posthumously bestowed on Lamprias. Sparta crowned the deceased boy with a golden wreath and four statues: in the *gymnasion* and agora of Sparta as well as in the sanctuary of Asklepios and the agora in Epidauros.⁷⁰ The city of Athens dedicated statues in the Athenian Acropolis, in the sanctuary in Eleusis next to the statues of his ancestors from Athens, and in the sanctuary in Epidauros.⁷¹ Lamprias’ body instantiated social power for himself and his extended family through his comeliness, character, and through a complex network of representation and signification generated by texts and images.

Physical beauty is highlighted in monuments honoring deceased mature men as well, especially if they had a personal history of involvement in sport. This is the case, for instance, in a consolation decree from Lykosoura in Arcadia honoring Saon Polycharmou from Megalopolis.⁷² Saon, we are told, zealously pursued bodily strength and beauty, frequently benefitted financially his motherland and proved himself inferior to no one in the virtues of his soul. We are further told that Saon’s wife defrayed the expenses for setting up bronze statues of her deceased husband in Olympia, Isthmia and Nemea, a move that strongly suggests an association with competitive sport. In another example from Roman Athens a deceased hierophant in the sanctuary of Eleusis allegedly

contained an aged soul in a vigorous body which combined beauty (*kallos*) and prudence (*sophrosynē*).⁷³

These attributes of the hegemonic athletic and civic body were presented and perceived as the result of incessant physical exertion. It is critical at this point to distinguish between the physiological aspects of bodily exertion and pain vis-à-vis their cultural interpretation and experience.⁷⁴ In the ancient Greek world bodily toil was an acknowledged feature of athletic success for authors of the Classical period, and for Pindar the toilsome training (*ponos* and its derivatives) that successful athletes endured was indispensable even for the most divinely endowed of athletes.⁷⁵ Post-Classical epigraphic discourses on the athletic body emphasize greatly the regimented and disciplined nature of bodily form acquired through toil and pain. Similar to the Archaic and Classical periods, later sources assume that hard training was a prerequisite for top-notch athletes and that it largely accounted for successful athletic careers. A first-century CE decree of the ecumenical guild of sacred victors praised Marcus Alfidios, an athlete who died while competing in Naples, for his *philoponia* towards athletic excellence.⁷⁶ In similar language the city of Elis extolled Tiberius Claudius Rufus, a pankratiast who competed in Olympia and whose name is associated with the first “sacred” victory recorded in the Olympic games.⁷⁷ Rufus competed in the Olympic games *anefedros* (l. 17, without a bye) and endured (διεκατέρησε) a strenuous competition until nightfall against opponents who enjoyed a bye, because he was impelled to compete to the maximum of his capacity in the hope of victory.⁷⁸

It was, however, a sign of the times that in decrees and other honorary texts of the Hellenistic and Imperial periods the discourse of athletic exertion revolved principally around the training of the *ephebes* and other youths frequenting *gymnasia*. The objective of carefully crafted training regimes in *gymnasia* was to internalize socially acceptable techniques of the body through acute physicality. Such techniques of the body were more firmly embedded through a recurring process, that lasted throughout an individual's life, of action, experience and reflection.⁷⁹ This process commenced at the household and continued, for many boys, in the *gymnasion* and the *ephebeia*. The graduates of the latter could boast of a well-trained and strong body that corresponded to the dominant masculine ideal of somatic qualities and civic values.

Quite often epigraphic representations of the athletic or civic body assume a hortatory, moralizing and self-effacing tone, emphasizing physical exertion and pain that led to moral betterment and other benefits for the sake of the individual but especially of the community. This ritualization of sport-induced pain, semantically denoted through the notion of *philoponia*, was especially commonplace in honorary decrees for gymnasiarchs, ephebarchs or other officials and benefactors, i.e. the people responsible for the fashioning of the character and civic persona of the *gymnasion* charges through a multifaceted regime of education and physical toil. Thus in the honorary decree for the gymnasiarch Diodoros from Ephesos (IK *Ephesos* 6, second century BCE), the honoree is

praised for providing all the necessities of athletic life in a liberal fashion and for encouraging the youth of the city towards the physical exertion (φιλοπονίαν) of body and soul in the *gymnasion*.⁸⁰ The decree is replete with key terms that signal to the reader the objectives of this rigorous training: orderly conduct (εὐκοσμία), manliness (εὐανδρία), dignity (σεμνότης), honor (δόξα). The last two attributes, i.e. dignity and honor, are presented as ancestral virtues that the youths, through their training in the *gymnasion*, were expected to emulate and internalize.⁸¹ It was this perceived dependence of character fashioning through the physical realities of the *gymnasion* training that accounted for the gymnasiarchs' tendency to rhetorically overemphasize, and possibly overrate, the corporeal exertion of *gymnasion* trainees. Menas of Sestos, for instance, while acting as gymnasiarch exhorted youths to ἀσκησιν καὶ φιλοπονίαν – a rather redundant way to denote hard training.⁸² Moreover, in Priene during his tenure of the *gymnasiarchia* A. Aemilius Zosimos awarded all trainees a prize for their *philoponia* in athletic and literary contests.⁸³ Similarly, Athenian *ephebes* of the late Hellenistic period were regularly praised for their *philoponia* for which they received wreaths individually and monuments collectively.⁸⁴

Eventually, the *philoponia* from an abstract notion of physical exertion became an actual *gymnasion* contest. It is attested in a number of cities, again mostly through honorary decrees for gymnasiarchs who oversaw the logistics of the competition and decided the victors.⁸⁵ In Veroia the prize for *philoponia* was given to an individual up to 30 years of age who trained most industriously throughout the year.⁸⁶ Moreover, events called *euexia* (“good conditioning,” “vigor”) and *eutaxia* (“good order,” “discipline”) were also part of *gymnasion* life in many Greek cities of the Hellenistic and Imperial periods.⁸⁷ The recently published ephebarchic law from Amphipolis, for instance, includes detailed provisions for monthly competitions in *eukosmia*, *philoponia*, *euexia* as well as a running event.⁸⁸ These *gymnasion* contests were considered complementary to the training exertion routines that were thought of as crucial in molding character attributes. In *euexia* contests individuals competed in fitness and healthy appearance, bodily attributes that they no doubt acquired after long periods of systematic training and dieting while the *eutaxia* was in all likelihood a contest in discipline and good behavior.⁸⁹ The honorary decree for the gymnasiarch Menas from Sestos points out that he provided shields or other pieces of armor as prizes for the long-distance race, the *eutaxia*, *philoponia* and *euexia* contests. Menas was almost certainly involved in the process of selecting the victors of these contests. In another case a victor list from Erythrai records victors for *gymnasion* contests in *philoponia*, *polumathia*, *euexia*, *eutaxia*, archery, javelin, *oplomachia* and torch-race, thus corroborating the point that such bodily exertion and comeliness events, combined with contests on literary and military preparedness, constituted the backbone of a *gymnasion's* activities from the late Hellenistic period onwards.⁹⁰

Bodily exertion and endurance were attributes that were much valued in the field of sport, but were also considered transferable traits that were highly appreciated in civic life. As many *ephebeia* cadets and professional athletes matured and transitioned into public service roles they were expected to demonstrate the same spirit of embodied *philoponia* that had sustained them through their *gymnasion* years. Athletically trained bodies were thus perceived as being invested with highly desirable civic qualities that made them prime candidates for positions of civic power and responsibility. As a result the discursive representation of the athlete's body transformed itself into the body of the virtuous civic leader. Physical exertion, prowess and endurance were qualities that were highly praised among civic elites with public leadership ambitions. Public figures who wielded such civic power were expected to manifest various degrees of physicality – although not necessarily an athlete's physique – in what was presented as an indefatigable quest to serve the best interests of their cities. We can also understand this process as dual (athletic, civic) manifestations of the dominant/hegemonic body underpinned by the institutional framework (*gymnasion*, political and religious offices) of the city.

The concept of the stratifying body, a concept developed to critically explain the multifaceted nature of sporting bodies whose identities remain in flux as they transform themselves over time through diverse embodied experiences, can illuminate the complexity of bodily constitution and reconfiguration of identities involved in the transition from athlete/*gymnasion* trainee to civic leader.⁹¹ Throughout the life of such a person the desired, i.e. hegemonic, bodily traits, including physical endurance, self-discipline, *philoponia* and many others, were shared by various manifestations of the same body – in our case first athlete then statesman. As a person aged the emphasis of the symbolic constitution and representation shifted towards acts of civic service, and the hegemonic bodily traits were put to work (or so the honorary documents for civic leaders would have us believe) towards state affairs. The narrative around a leader's body, however, always integrated past acts of athletic achievement, whenever available. Hence bodily performance in these cases articulated normativity in both athletics and politics. For mature men the process was institutionalized, i.e. performed, within the context of civic institutions (e.g. council, magistracies) and sanctified euergetism (e.g. liturgies) as well as other cultural mainstays of post-Classical Greek cities. Elite family traditions and societal expectations were also crucial in inculcating perceptions of somatic endurance and performance.

This spirit of selfless physical exertion of civic leaders could manifest itself, according to honorary decrees, while holding a particular office or in pursuit of the affairs of the city. This included the office of the *gymnasiarchia*, a position that served to exemplify the spirit of endurance and perseverance that was expected from young trainees. Gymnasiarchs were not only expected to instill, as pointed out earlier, *philoponia* and other desirable attributes to the youth of a city. Equally importantly, they were also expected to display the same attributes themselves. Hence the abundantly eulogistic second-century BCE decree for

Agias from Pergamon presents the honoree as an exceedingly dedicated gymnasiarch who “did not spare any expense or shun away from bodily distress (σωματικὴν κακοπαθίαν)” in the performance of his duties.⁹² In another case the gymnasiarch Herakleidas from Phintias in Sicily was praised for his diligence (ἐπιμέλεια) and *philoponia* with which he pursued the affairs of the *gymnasion*.⁹³

The same spirit of selfless *philoponia* exhibited by gymnasiarchs was also anticipated in the efforts of civic officials and other professionals who rendered crucial services to the city, irrespective of whether such officials could claim any personal or familial athletic achievements or benefactions. Interestingly, the civic oath of Neoklaudiopolis, dated 4/3 BCE, includes an emphatic statement to spare neither body, nor soul, nor life in defense of the interests of Ceasar Augustus.⁹⁴ Such pronouncements suggest that self-effacing notions on the physical body had thoroughly permeated civic ideology and, under certain circumstances, imperial and civic authorities might have expected even non-elites to act upon them.

However, typically it was the civic elites class, from which the overwhelming majority of office-holders emanated, that had numerous and prominent opportunities during their lives to demonstrate the selfless disposition of their bodies towards lofty civic goals. The embodiment of this self-sacrificing and public-oriented spirit of physical endurance by civic elites is splendidly illustrated in a late Hellenistic decree from Dionysopolis honoring Akornion.⁹⁵ The honoree undertook embassies, services and dangers “unwearyingly” for the good of his city (ll. 30–32). Akornion, the decree continues, dedicated himself “body and soul” whenever he acted on behalf of his city and subsidized (literally “embodied” *σωματοποιῶν*) multiple civic services. In this manner, he manifested his earnestness for the well-being of the city (ll. 38–42). Akornion, in other words, gave bodily existence to the munificence, endurance, dedication and all other qualities, physical and moral, that exemplified a civically minded member of the ruling elite.

Numerous other honorary documents for office-holders substantiate this trend in virtually every aspect of public life of Greek communities. Thus Killos Deme-triou, an *agoranomos* in Paros in the second century BCE, was praised for surpassing all standards of *philoponia* while in office, to the benefit of the *demos*.⁹⁶ A second-century BCE decree from Smyrna honors the city of Kaunos and three of its citizens who served as judges in Smyrna and who endured *kakopathia* but conducted themselves with *philoponia* while carrying out their duties.⁹⁷ Meanwhile, Aristagoras of Histria undertook the expenses for the building of fortifications at a perilous time for the city and in the process, according to his honorary decree, he did not spare any bodily toils (σωματικῶν πόνων).⁹⁸ Moreover, according to a decree of the *demos* of Abdera, dated in the 160s BCE, two envoys from Teos acting on behalf of Abdera in an embassy to Rome also endured “mental and bodily distress” in their efforts to bring the mission to a successful conclusion.⁹⁹ Beyond particular offices and benefactions, the ideology of physical exertion and bodily anguish was at times represented as underpinning and symbolizing a lifetime of civic service, as in the case of Archonidas from

Anaphe who was praised for displaying throughout his public career *arête* and *philoponia* in all affairs pertaining to his fatherland (*πατρίδα*).¹⁰⁰ Similarly, Diosdorus Paspáros, a prominent public figure and benefactor in Pergamon at the time of the Mithridatic wars endured all kinds of “dangers and distress” for the good of his city.¹⁰¹ Finally, the notion that physical exertion for a gallant cause that benefits the community was a pivotal civic value is also succinctly formulated in an early Hellenistic publicly displayed list of admonitions from Miletopolis which invites readers to *πόνει μετ’ εὐκλείας* – strive honorably.¹⁰²

An implicit but clear link intertwines all these public eulogies of industrious and altruistic civic service to the *gymnasion* culture and adolescent training of Greek civic elites. Physical endurance was perceived as a transferable virtue, inculcated first and foremost through the athletic *ponoi* of the *gymnasion*, which is presented in our sources as an educational institution where physical and character attributes first became embodied. Throughout the Greek-speaking world the *gymnasion* thus emerged as the prime stage for fashioning the body of the elite citizen – a strong body, able to endure the physical hardships of public life and imbued with a spirit of self-sacrificing service to the city.¹⁰³ This spirit represented itself in honorific discourses as a constant expenditure of personal resources – physical and financial.

4b Athletic victory and civic service

A concomitant feature of the epigraphic record for civic leaders was the incorporation of athletic victories, in local and interstate games, in an individual’s roster of civic services and benefactions. The epigraphic record makes evident that athletic training and victories did not merely define social elites but in a sense also retrospectively justified their positions of social and political ascendancy. Sport victories, especially those achieved in sacred games, elevated the public cachet of a civic leader and accrued valuable social capital. Furthermore, civic elites represented these victories as beneficial to the community as a whole and in similar fashion as other prominent acts of civic service, e.g. embassies, tenure of civic offices and benefaction. The implications of this ideological association and discursive representation of athletics and civic service were felt far and wide. The growth of agonistic benefactions, i.e. acts of elite munificence aimed at sponsoring athletic training and competition, was symptomatic of the shift of perceptions regarding the role of sport in the self-definition of elites.

Numerous honorary decrees and monuments exemplify these trends, especially the representation of an athletic record as complementing and enhancing a conspicuous career of public service.¹⁰⁴ Two inscriptions honoring Publius Aelius Aristomachos from Magnesia on the Meander further illustrate how a nexus of athletic achievement, civic identity and family loyalty played out in the representation of Greek or Hellenized civic elites under Roman rule. Aristomachos was a pankratiast with an impressive record of victories. As his prose honorary inscription points out he won in the Olympic games of 117 CE as well

as in numerous other prominent interstate games including the Isthmian, the Nemean, the Actian, the Capitolian, the Sebastan and the Panathenaic games, the latter in 119 CE.¹⁰⁵ A second monument, whose base bearing an elegiac inscription celebrates the athletic victories of the same athlete, also adorned the urban space of Magnesia. In keeping with most honorary inscriptions of his day, Aristomachos' monuments pay tribute to his native city: the elegiac inscription mentions the city of origin prominently on the first line before the name of the honoree, while the prose victory list refers to his "sweet homeland."¹⁰⁶ What is particularly illuminating, in attempting to evaluate Aristomachos' discourse of class and civic identity through athletics, is the fact that his interstate athletic career was ostensibly very short, as he achieved his recorded victories only as a boy (*pais*) and young man (*ageneios*). In fact, because *I.Magnesia* 180 provides the exact dates of two of his victories, Aristomachos' athletic career can be reconstructed with reasonable confidence.¹⁰⁷ Despite the fact that after the end of his athletic career Aristomachos distinguished himself as an civic official in embassies to Rome and quite possibly in other services, for which he and members of his family received Roman citizenship and other accolades, it was his achievements during his short career as an international athlete in his teens that took pride of place in his commemorative monuments.

The life of Marcus Antonius Idagras from Patara, active in the late Hellenistic period, bears several similarities to the life and career of Publius Aelius Aristomachos.¹⁰⁸ In the first part of his honorary decree (ll. 1–12) the reader is presented with highlights of the civic career of Idagras, who was a dual citizen of Rome and Patara: *strategos* for the *koinon* of the Lykians, participant in diplomatic delegations to Rome, and a generous benefactor. Then follows, in summary form, a list of the most distinguished of Idagras' athletic victories. These included *pankration* victories in the boys' age-group in the Nemean games, the Heraia at Argos, the Letoa organized by the *koinon* of the Lykians and the Romaia in Rhodes. Idagras also won the *pankration* for boys and *ageneioi* at the Romaia games conducted by the *koinon* of the Lykians as well as, the decree informs us, in "other sacred and crown games." Idagras, in other words, was another example of a member of a civic elite that launched his public persona with an illustrious athletic career as a youth (there is no indication in the decree that Idagras' engagement with sport continued as an adult), followed by a distinguished record of offices and benefactions in his mature years. Once again, sport victories, military leadership, diplomacy and euergetism blend into a career of civic service that was expected of and defined local elites.

It is worth noting the nuances of representation in athletic victory commemoration of civic leaders. In some cases, a distinguished athletic victory would be displayed as a badge of honor and as the high point of the public careers of athletically-inclined elites. As already pointed out, this is the impression conveyed by the record for Publius Aelius Aristomachos from Magnesia on the Meander. In another case, an inscription from Miletus of the early Imperial period provides a list of eponymous *stephanephoroi*. The names of the office-

holders are recorded in a succinct manner, usually with a simple formula of name and patronymic. The only exception is Nikophon who is identified as "Olympic victor and high priest."¹⁰⁹ An epigram identifies Nikophon as a boxer and Olympic champion in the late first century BCE. Other athletes/public figures incorporated in their epigraphic representation generic references to victories in "sacred games," e.g. Polemaios of Kolophon.¹¹⁰ Another example of the latter trend was Ammianos from Eumeneia in Phrygia, active in the second or third century CE. Among the highlights of his public life the fragmentary honorary base lists extraordinary victories in sacred games (*hieronikes paradoxos*), member of the local boule, first *strategos*, *agoranomos*, secretary at great expense, *dekaprotos* (member of the tax-collecting board), ambassador to the emperor and possibly *xystarch*.¹¹¹

Normally victories at the top games, especially of the *periodos*, achieved by civic dignitaries were mentioned in detail – references to victories in sacred games without further elaboration most likely indicate games of lesser repute. Moreover, even officials with victories in small-scale games with strictly local appeal incorporated references to such victories into their epigraphic master narratives of public achievements. In some areas the latter trend is more prominently represented in the epigraphic record, undoubtedly spurred by intra-elite competition. Thus a fragmentary honorary inscription from Kamiros provides a list of the achievements and services of an unknown public figure.¹¹² As a young man he was a successful athlete with victories in the wrestling for boys at the local Poseidonia games as well at the Nemean games (the panhellenic or a local festival?), presumably also in wrestling. Following his athletic career he served successfully as general, treasurer, *phylarch* and *choregos*. In the neighboring city of Rhodes Aristomenes, a public figure active in the second century BCE, was victor at the local Dioskourea and Epitaphia as well as holder of various public offices, including *trierarch*, treasurer and *prytanes*.¹¹³ At the very end of the Hellenistic period and again from the island of Rhodes, Pausanias from Lindos was a victor at the Halieia in the boys' wrestling and the local Epitaphia, followed by a distinguished public career as general, trierarch and gymnasiarch.¹¹⁴ Moreover, in the case of Teisias Thedaumou from the city of Kedrai in the Rhodian Peraia, his victories in local contests of limited appeal were represented on a par with distinguished civic and military service.¹¹⁵ Looking back at his public career at some point late in his life Teisias listed among his major public achievements/services a spell as president of the council, a priesthood in the local temple of Apollo Pythios, a leading role in at least four military campaigns, victories in wrestling and the *pankration* in three local contests (Herakleia, Dioskourea, Poseidonia), as well as his service as *agonothetes*. For all these achievements, Teisias was honored with golden crowns by various civic groups and entities.

The trajectory of athletic and civic service achievements eulogized in elite representation was easier to achieve in mid-size and small communities that retained both the institutional apparatus of civic governance and a thriving athletic life. In such cities there was a limited pool of elites/potential office

holders, usually members of a handful of families, that were expected to rise to public offices and perform benefactions over several generations. In such contexts, it was not unusual for the same person to pursue simultaneously an athletic and a public service career. Such was the case of Marcus Auerelius Oples from imperial Termessos, a small Pisidian city with a very vibrant agonistic life. While serving as priest of Poseidon for life, Oples also engaged in a successful athletic career with extraordinary victories in sacred games (*hieronikes paradoxos*) as well as a victory in men's wrestling in the local *themis* in honor of Titus Ailius Agripeinos.¹¹⁶

4c Athletic achievement, multiple identities and corporeality: the case of L. Septimius Flavianus Flavillianus

Until recently, L. Septimius Flavianus Flavillianus of Oinoanda, an athlete specializing in wrestling and the *pankration*, was known mainly from victory monuments commemorating his victories in local and interstate games. At the time of the construction of the inscribed mausoleum of his father, Flavianus Diogenes, and of Licinnia Flavilla, an older kinswoman, in c. 210 CE Flavillianus was recorded as a successful pankratiast and victor in sacred games.¹¹⁷ At that juncture he was still competing in the boys' age-group as demonstrated by the monument set up to commemorate his victory in the wrestling competition for boys in the 13th version of the local Meleagreia shortly after 212 CE.¹¹⁸ In the same inscription he is singled out as an "extraordinary" (*paradoxos*) victor, most probably signifying a double victory in wrestling and *pankration* in a previously held festival. Three additional statue bases attest to Flavillianus' victories in the men's age-group in the *pankration* in the local Euaresteia as well as in the wrestling and *pankration* in the Meleagreia contest.¹¹⁹ On the occasion of his victories as an adult at the Meleagreia Flavillianus was styled "extraordinary sacred victor" (*hieronikes paradoxos*) with victories in Laodikeia, Argos, Sardis, Ephesos and Naples.¹²⁰ An expanded list of interstate victories of Flavillianus, that included a reference to a victory at Athens and at least one other city, was provided in the monument that celebrated his only known victory at the Euaresteia.¹²¹

An important piece of the puzzle regarding the athletic and public career of Flavillianus has recently come to light in the form of an inscribed statue base that contains a decree of the council, the people and the *gerousia* of Oinoanda and which is dated post 232 CE, i.e. during the last stages or, most likely, shortly after the end of Flavillianus athletic career.¹²² In the honorary text Flavillianus is discussed in terms that underscore his exalted athletic and social status.¹²³ Furthermore, he is greeted as *paradoxos*, a reference to his record of athletic victories, but the bulk of the inscription is taken up with a narrative of the service of Flavillianus towards the Roman army as well as the actions undertaken by his city to honor him. More specifically, as part of Severus Alexander's campaign against the Persians in 232 CE Flavillianus performed a *parapompe*, i.e. a liturgy that necessitated large-scale payments for army-related

provisions (in this case recruits) as well as administrative oversight of the process of collecting and utilizing the funds contributed by local elites charged with that particular tax-burden. Because of his high-standing as *hieronikes*, Flavillianus in all likelihood enjoyed immunity from taxes and liturgies, hence this high-cost service was undertaken voluntarily. But on this occasion Flavillianus' benefaction went beyond a prodigious cash payment: he was personally charged with recruiting for the army suitable young men from among the city's graduating *ephebes* and other young trainees in the *gymnasia* – one suspects that Flavillianus' athletic background might have been thought of as eminently suitable for this service – and then he personally delivered the group of new conscripts in Hierapolis in Syria. For all these services Flavillianus was honored with statues by all the tribes of his native Oinoanda and, while still alive, with the posthumous enrolment among the heroes of the tribe of Obrimotes. Heroization was in such cases tantamount to deification and hence was one of the highest honors bestowed by cities, especially if awarded pre-emptively as in the case of Flavillianus. These were honors deserved for the most distinguished citizens and benefactors.

The dossier of the various monuments commemorating the athletic and civic achievements of Flavillianus exemplifies the close association of the three pillars (eurgatism, public office and athletics) of individual elite identity with narratives of civic power and munificence of elite families. Flavillianus' life was a continuous reinvention of the dominant masculinity theme, i.e. member of an elite clan, athlete, civic servant, benefactor, mediator between his community and Rome. At different stages of his life, each of these occupations advanced to prominence and were portrayed as the primary identifiers of Flavillianus, while the remainder remained in the background only to emerge as dominant at different junctures. This was a reflexive and autopoietic process: Flavillianus, and all other elites who assumed and represented during their lifetimes multiple personae, over a period of time positioned themselves in manifold ways within social relations. Flavillianus most likely internalized these roles and acted in a manner that was consistent with the identities imputed to them.¹²⁴ Moreover, the public performance of these roles both created and reinforced Flavillianus' multiple identities. Corporeality was key in this process: the various identities assumed by Flavillianus were literally inscribed on his body through the performance of sport and public services, and were represented to his fellow citizens also in bodily/monumental form in a series of publicly displayed statuary. Flavillianus' statues were a critical component of bodily materiality and comportment, two aspects of the process of embodying and representing identities that are almost entirely irretrievable for us.

4d Athletics, family traditions and elite ritualized friendship

Discourses of corporeality, athletic achievement and civic service gained additional validation if presented in an intergenerational mantle. IK *Ephesos* 1575 is an honorary inscription of the late second or early third century CE celebrating

the achievements of a pair of father and son from Ephesos. In succinct language the inscription reminded the civic audience that the father, Marcus Aurelius Artemidoros son of Attalos, had served the city of Ephesos as *gerousiastes*, *neopoios* and *agoranomos*. The son, Marcus Aurelius Attalos son of Artemidoros, is presented as a *gerousiastes*, *neopoios* and Olympic victor. Attalos was in all likelihood a victor in one of the numerous local Olympic games and not at the prestigious festival at Elis. Given the origin of the pair, Attalos probably won at the Olympic games at Ephesos, a feat that he and his family thought worth commemorating in the joint memorial. Another case illustrating the intertwined nature of familial relationships, athletics and civic service in the Imperial period is provided by two inscriptions recording honors for the brothers Tiberius Claudius Pollion and Tiberius Claudius Hephaestion from Tralleis.¹²⁵ The two brothers belonged to a prominent family with athletic tradition: even though they could not claim any athletic achievements themselves, their grandfather Epigonos is recorded in both honorary inscriptions as four times Olympic champion, again almost certainly a reference to a local Olympic festival.¹²⁶ Pollion had also served as gymnasiarch, and defrayed all relevant expenses in the three *gymnasia* of the city for a quarter of a year. Moreover, he made olive oil available in these *gymnasia* throughout the day. Despite the distinguished record of euergetism of Pollion, it was ostensibly believed that a reference to past athletic victories by a family member – in Pollion's case a grandfather – clearly enhanced the standing of the honoree.

The familial and intergenerational honorific discourse worked cumulatively: multiple and diverse honors, personal or familial, were paraded in meticulous detail, part and parcel of an intra-elite *agon* in epigraphic representation. The monument honoring Chaireas for his service as *agoranomos* of Ephesos also records that he had also served as gymnasiarch, provider of oil in all of the city's *gymnasia*, *ephebarch*, general (*strategos*), envoy (*presbeutes*) as well as the fact that he was active with distinction in the performance of liturgies. Moreover, his brother, who had also served as general and performed liturgies, was victor in the Olympic games, probably the local Ephesian version.¹²⁷

Intergenerational links, athletic prowess and victories were invariably and prominently recorded in funerary monuments as well. In Iasos, for instance, a deceased boy was honored by the council and the *demos* as a son of a *nemeonikes* while in imperial Oinoanda a deceased young athlete is designated as the son of distinguished parents who had held many offices.¹²⁸ Moreover, as a monument for Marius Octavius Kallipianos Kleon, a boy victor in a local *themis* in imperial Ariassos, makes evident, civic qualities such as patriotism were considered hereditary, at least for members of the elite. In this case the teenager honoree is described as a "noteworthy and patriotic man."¹²⁹ His athletic victory, his pedigree and undoubtedly his participation in the local *gymnasion* culture, strengthened and enhanced the public image of an upstanding figure of the community, even for a boy who had not been tried in the intricacies of local government.¹³⁰

A recently published honorary inscription of the early third century CE from Tlos highlights a complementary aspect of this process of elite identity construction, namely the forging of intra-elite networks, based on personal acquaintance, friendship and camaraderie, through athletics.¹³¹ In many respects athletics, mainly through the *ephebeia* and the wider *gymnasion* culture, had become by the Roman imperial period a major – if not the main – stage of ritualized elite interconnectivity. The document from Tlos celebrates the athletic victories of Marcus Aurelius Epaphrodeitos. Epaphrodeitos was a top-tier athlete with victories in the most prestigious games of the time, including four consecutive victories at the Olympic games, three victories at the Pythian games as well as victories in games in mainland Greece, Asia and Italy. The decree is exceptional in that it allows us to situate an internationally renowned athlete into his local, home-town context and glimpse something of the association that existed between him and another member of the local elite. The monument was paid for by Marcus Claudius Herakleides, known from another inscription in which he was honored as *agonothetes* and *archiprophetes*. These two men, i.e. Epaphrodeitos the distinguished athlete and Herakleides the civic benefactor, are described as συνακμάσαντα αὐτῷ τῇ ἡλικίᾳ καὶ δόξῃ “having reached together the high point of age and fame,” which must be understood in the sense that they have concurrently reached the pinnacle of their public careers. As the editor of the Epaphrodeitos inscription correctly surmised, even though the individuals concerned made a name in different fields of public life, they clearly considered themselves linked with a bond that was, in all likelihood, fostered through athletic training at a young age at the *gymnasion* of Tlos.¹³²

4e Athletic training, victory and agonistic benefaction

In addition to *gymnasion* training and civic magistracies, in the Hellenistic and Imperial periods elite status was also articulated through benefaction and other forms of munificence. Retired athletes and former *gymnasion* trainees often engaged and commemorated agonistic benefactions, most usually *agonothesia*i, *gymnasiarchia*i or diplomatic missions aimed at upgrading the status of local contests. Public representation of these services often co-opted the athletic commemoration language to extol the services of the public figure/benefactor. Thus an early third century CE dossier from Thyateira in Asia Minor records the various stages of agonistic achievements and benefactions of Gaius Perilius Alexandros, a member of the local civic elite. As a young man he won gloriously (ἐνδόξως) the *pankration* at the great Asklepeia, a local contest.¹³³ Some time later, ostensibly after the end of his athletic career, he served as high priest and in charge of the baths.¹³⁴ The highlight of his public career, however, was his embassy to emperor Elagabalus in which he secured the establishment of a sacred, eiselastic, *isopythios* and ecumenical contest.¹³⁵ This was probably not a new contest but a rebranding and perhaps

upgrading of the local Hadrianeia.¹³⁶ Another honorary inscription for the same individual refers in agonistic idiom to both features of Alexandros' public persona, i.e. athletics and civic service.¹³⁷ He is dubbed the "first and only athlete of all time," a boast usually reserved to athletes of the highest caliber and victors in *periodos* contests, although in this case it is very unlikely that Alexandros' athletic achievements reached such heights. In another rhetorical stretch, in connection with his efforts to establish the *isopythios* contest, the same inscription employs a well-known agonistic surplus-value term and calls the honoree an "undefeated ambassador" (ἄλειπτον πρεσβευτήν).

From the perspective of the civic authorities and the benefactors who financed the operations of *gymnasia* the process of assimilating athletic training with civic service and social status was facilitated through the discourse of amelioration, i.e. the idea that athletic training as well as other activities performed in *gymnasia* were not only physically but also morally and intellectually beneficial.¹³⁸ A decree of the boule and the *demos* of Pergamon, dated to the 130s BCE, honored a gymnasiarch for his role in advancing the "training and propriety of *ephebes* and youths" (ἐφήβων καὶ νέων ἀγωγῆς καὶ κοσμιότητος).¹³⁹ This and other cognate phrases, underlining the edification of youths, became stock in honorary inscriptions for gymnasiarchs in the late Hellenistic and Imperial periods. In another case, a decree of the people and the council of Sestos honoring Menas focuses on the association between training in the *gymnasion* and civic service. Menas was a versatile benefactor who at times became involved in diplomatic missions, priest-hoods and civic magistracies, yet a significant portion of the decree is occupied by the honoree's two terms as gymnasiarch.¹⁴⁰ What is intriguing about this account is that, in addition to providing details of the training, the contests and other activities carried out by the *ephebes* and the *neoi* in the *gymnasion*, we are also presented with a framework on how the life of the *gymnasion* was perceived and negotiated by benefactors, young trainees and the citizenry at large:

through the example of his [i.e. Menas'] emulation, he encouraged the young men to exercise and train hard, for which the people welcomed his zeal and eagerness and allowed him to commemorate his deeds in inscriptions, and deemed him worthy of being praised in decrees, and the *ephebes* and the young men crowned him and the *ephebarch*, and though he accepted the honor he freed them from the expense involved and made the dedication of the weapons at his own expense.¹⁴¹

Further below, regarding Menas' second tenure of the *gymnasiarchia*, we read:

He encouraged through his zeal the young men to exercise and train hard, which would cause the mind of the younger men, by competing for bravery, to receive a suitable training in moral excellence

(Il. 70–72)

and

he dealt in a friendly way with all those who gave lectures, wishing in this too to secure for his native city glory through men of education; and he looked after the education of the *ephebes* and the young men...

(ll. 74–76)¹⁴²

This strategy of representation of Menas' services was based on a number of widely shared premises: that the athletic training of the city's youths in the *gymnasion*, as part of or independent of the *ephebeia*, combined with a measure of lectures and the emulation of historical or contemporary exempla, were essential for inculcating moral qualities and civic loyalty to *gymnasion* habitués.¹⁴³ Moreover, a *gymnasion* education was also perceived and represented as beneficial to the city as a whole, and as a gift of the rich elites such as Menas, to all the groups that constituted a community. In a Hellenistic decree for Chrysippos, a *paidonomos* from the small city of Hydai, it is asserted that all the constituent elements of the *gymnasion*-education are ultimately "profitable to the homeland" while according to a Hellenistic decree for Agias, a gymnasiarch from Pergamon, training in the *gymnasion* not only enhances the character of the pupils but also "shores up the reputation of the city."¹⁴⁴ In this light, and because of their munificent services at the *gymnasion* and the community at large, gymnasiarchs and other agonistic benefactors were presented as real-life models for the *gymnasion* youths – in the case of the decree for Menas words like φιλαγάθως ("generously"), μεγαλομερῶς ("magnificently") and λαμπρὰν ("splendid") are strategically scattered throughout the decree to underscore the honoree's conspicuous spending. In consequence, and in recognition of his exemplary service in facilitating the civic training of youths in the *gymnasion*, Menas was honored in a multifaceted manner that was reciprocally commensurate to the extent of his generosity. This and other honorary monuments also make it clear that a city's goal in voting and publicly displaying such accolades was to expand the template of *gymnasion*-centered education and athletics as a conduit of civic service by encouraging more wealthy citizens to expend their resources in community-oriented benefactions.¹⁴⁵

5 Conclusion

In the ancient Greek world embodiment and performance were central in the process of identity construction and negotiation through sport. Discourses on athletic corporeality effectively delineated the basic parameters of how the normative body of an athlete or a civic leader was to be perceived. Discourses on bodily qualities and civic values were closely intertwined, and therefore had real life consequences. Physical exertion and endurance was inscribed onto the bodies of athletes and civic leaders through training and competition in the *gymnasion* and festivals, and then through a tireless performance of a seemingly endless series of acts of public service. In the preceding pages I focused on some

case studies related to representations of the athletic body and notions of masculinity. In all these cases the athletic body emerges as a malleable social category that negotiated perceptions of normative or deviant masculinity. In the case of Classical Athens, the well-trained body displayed in the context of civic festivals, especially the tribal competitions, articulated basic principles of the Athenian democracy. But at the same time the athletic training and dietary regimes, especially of top-level athletes, were perceived in some quarters as encoding elements of the lifestyle of the anti-citizen. Furthermore, honorary and commemorative texts of the Hellenistic and Imperial periods for civic elites time and again emphasize the link between performance and representation of elite personae. These honorary texts attempt to concretize for contemporary audiences the organic connection and transition from *gymnasion* training and athletic competition to local power structures. Moreover, they suggest that a *gymnasion*-centered education and athletic achievements were perceived not merely as integral constituents but as prerequisites in the succession of roles assumed by aspiring members of the civic elite.

In this context a well-trained body, preferably one that had endured physical pain through training and had achieved distinction in the major games, became an indispensable component of personal narratives of distinction as well as a firm token of public service and benefaction. To be sure, since the Archaic period athletic achievements and physicality have always been perceived, in some quarters at least, as being compliant with communal values and concerns. However, in the post-Classical world physical exercise and the athletic body were universally and unabashedly connected to a moralizing discourse that emphasized the improvement of the individual and service to the community. The reasons for this shift in tone, if not in fundamental perceptions, can be sought in the social and political configuration of the Greek *polis* in the post-Classical world. In an era of diminished opportunities for political agency, affiliation to a community was signified primarily through participation in ceremonies, festivals, activities of the *gymnasion*, and other recurring performances of civic identity.

The importance of such practices for the elaboration of a Greek cultural *koine* has been discussed extensively by scholars in recent years. In the preceding discussion I attempted to highlight the centrality and symbolism of the concept of the body, and especially the well-trained, athletic and civic body that endures innumerable toils, for the construction of this particular genre of civic ideology and elite cultural identity. Discourses of bodily comeliness combined with intense corporeal experiences were dominant in both athletics and civic life. Furthermore, both of these sets of practices were publicly instantiated: athletics and acts of civic service, including acts of *euergetism* that local elites resorted to so frequently in order to consolidate their position of social prominence, were gendered bodily performances that invited – indeed necessitated – the approbation of the public gaze in games and festivals, civic assemblies and monumental commemoration in the form of multiple statues and inscriptions. This intricate nexus of

body and civic ideology explains why civic elites carefully constructed a public persona of athleticism from an early age, imbued with impeccable moral standards. In the dominant civic discourse, toilsome training and engagement with sport betokened a commitment to civic service and benefaction for life.

Notes

- 1 For the political, diplomatic and military background see Robert and Robert 1989, 11–62; Lehmann 1998 and 2000, with the comments by Boffo 2003. For the Polemaios honorary inscription see Robert and Robert 1989, 11–17 = *SEG* 39.1243, ca. 130–110 BCE.
- 2 *SEG* 39.1243.I, 1–7: ἔτι τὴν ἀπὸ τῶν ἐφήβων ἔχων ἡλικίαν προσεδρεύων τῷ γυμνασίῳ... τὸ δὲ σῶμα τοῖς ἀπὸ τῶν γυμνασιῶν ἐθισμοῖς ἐναθλήσας ἐστεφανώθη μὲν ἱεροῦς ἀγῶνας.
- 3 *SEG* 39.1243.I, 7–9.
- 4 For Polemaios' *agonothesia* in the Great Klaria see Chapter 3.6.
- 5 For the notion of the “shared self,” which I enrich here with performative elements, see Holstein and Gubrium 2000.
- 6 For an overview of modern conceptions (and misconceptions) of Greek athletic bodily culture see Osborne 2011, 27–37.
- 7 Frank 1991, especially 48–51.
- 8 For Thersites and his conflict with Odysseus see *Il.* 2, 211–277.
- 9 Plut. *Ages.* 9.5; cf. Polyb. 3.6.12. See Briant 2002. The same attitude was also projected on Egyptians, see Hdt. 2.102.
- 10 Wellard 2009.
- 11 Stähli 2012.
- 12 The following discussion on the athletic body in epinician poetry and Classical Athens draws from and expands Papakonstantinou 2012a.
- 13 For a discussion see Smith 2007, 109–111.
- 14 Pind. *Ol.* 8, 19–20.
- 15 Pind. *Ol.* 10, 99–104.
- 16 Pind. *Ol.* 9, 89–94.
- 17 Pind. *Isthm.* 4, 42–51. Melissos is further praised for his Isthmian and Nemean chariot-race victories as well as for his family tradition in equestrian sports.
- 18 See Pind. *Pyth.* 10, 60 where the victor is described as an object of interest for unmarried girls. On the athletes' erotic appeal as depicted in literature and statuary see Steiner 1998; Scanlon 2002, Chapter 8; Fisher 2006.
- 19 Victor as an adornment and source of glory to his city: Pind. *Nem.* 2, 8; *Isthm.* 6, 66–71; Bacchyl. 6, 15–6; 10, 17; 13, 58–83. Cf. Pind. *Nem.* 6, 45–50 where the victor's family achievements provide an opportunity for eulogists to adorn their homeland.
- 20 Xen. *Symp.* 1.8–9.
- 21 Osborne 1997, 1998 and 2011; Garelli and Visa-Ondarçuhu 2010, especially 289–338; Barrow 2018, especially Chapter 1. See also Porter 1999 for the complex interface of historical and idealized bodies in the ancient world; and Fögen and Lee 2009 for a range of embodied configurations and discourses in the ancient world.
- 22 Neer 2002, 54–55, 93–55 and *passim*.
- 23 See S. Turner 2012.
- 24 Hawhee 2004. For participation at the activities of the *gymnasion* as a means of articulating gender and group identities see Kyle 2015, 81–87. Despite the role of athletics in elite theories and practices of youth education and upbringing, for

- many Athenian intellectuals the body and its physical training were considered as inferior in nature to the mind; see Young 2005.
- 25 Lavrencic 1991. More recently Pritchard 2010 and 2012 (with Papakonstantinou 2014c for reservations) has argued for the popularity of athletics in Classical Athens, mostly on the basis of a set of skills and concepts that athletics shared with war.
 - 26 See Chapter 2 for an elaboration of this point.
 - 27 Clairmont 1993–1995.
 - 28 For the coalescence between epinician poetry and statuary in the commemoration of athletic victory see Steiner 1998 and 2001, Chapter 5; Smith 2007. It should be noted that the multi-layered network of Athenian artistic representations of the nude, including athletic, male body has been rendered even more complex by the agenda of early pioneers of classical scholarship, especially art historians, who for a host of reasons have idealized ancient Greek visual and literary depictions of the male body. See Osborne 1997; Weiler 2010.
 - 29 Defeated athletes, Pind. *Pyth.* 8, 86–87; see also Pind. *Ol.* 8, 68–69.
 - 30 For Archaic critics of Greek sport see Papakonstantinou 2014b.
 - 31 For athletic facilities in Classical Athens see Kyle 1993, 56–101. For increased participation see discussion in Chapter 2.2 and Chapter 2, note 30 for references.
 - 32 *Paneg.* 44–45.
 - 33 Kyle 1993, 131–134.
 - 34 For athletic festivals in Classical Athens see Osborne 2010.
 - 35 Ar. *Nub.* 413–420.
 - 36 Ar. *Ran.* 1088.
 - 37 Ar. *Ran.* 1087–1098.
 - 38 Osborne 2011, 27–37. The same was not the case for good conditioning, which was recognized as a direct consequence of athletic training.
 - 39 Ar. *Pax* 33–35.
 - 40 Eur. fr. 282 Nauck, 4–6.
 - 41 Eur. *Antiope* fr. 20 Kambitsis.
 - 42 Achae. frs. 3 and 4 Snell.
 - 43 Arist. *Eth.Nic.* 2.1106b. For the excesses of athletic diet see also Xen. *Mem.*, 3.14.3; Pl. *Resp.* 1.338c–d; Arist. *Pol.*, 1338b40–1339a10; *Eth. Nic.* 2.1106b; and possibly Alex. fr. 168 Kock; Theophil. fr. 8 Kock.
 - 44 Visa 1992.
 - 45 Hippoc. *Salubr.* 7.
 - 46 Hippoc. *Aph.*, 1.3; cf. Xen. *Symp.*, 2.17; Arist. *Gen. an.*, 4.768b29–33.
 - 47 *Resp.*, 3.403e–404a; cf. *Amat.* 132c.
 - 48 Carter 1986; Christ 2006.
 - 49 For representations of bodily form, especially beauty, in Classical Athens see Hawley 1998.
 - 50 The earliest reference to the Athenian *euandria* is IG II².2311, an inscription of the early fourth century BCE which records events and prizes in the Panathenaic games. See further Crowther 1985 (= Crowther 2004, 333–339); Boegehold 1996 argues that the *euandria* was a choral competition, a suggestion that does not square well with ancient sources which emphasize the physical aspects of the contest.
 - 51 Celebration of manhood, Crowther 2004, 336.
 - 52 Roubal 2003; Van Steen 2011.
 - 53 See Crowther 1985, 287 (= Crowther 2004, 335); Bugh 1990; and Kennell 1999 for references to primary evidence. Both Bugh and Kennell consider the *euandria* as military displays. *Euandria* contests are also attested in other parts of the Greek world. See Crowther 1985.

- 54 SEG 39.1243.I, 16–18.
- 55 SEG 39.1243.II, 22. For a similar turn of phrase see *IosPE* I².355 (with emendations in SEG 50.690), 27–28, first century CE, Chersonesus.
- 56 For extensive analysis see König 2005 and Newby 2005.
- 57 Luc. *Anach.* 12.
- 58 See especially Luc. *Anach.* 20 and 24.
- 59 Luc. *Anach.* 25.
- 60 Dio Chrys. 28.2–3 (Iatrokles); 28.5 and 12; 29.3–6 (Melanchomas); 28.3–4 (athletic bodies like bronze statues).
- 61 Dio Chrys. 28.12.
- 62 Dio Chrys. 29.6.
- 63 Luc. *Anach.* 12.
- 64 See especially the discussion of König 2005, Chapters 2 and 3.
- 65 MAMA 8.417 = Roueché 1993, no. 89, 15–18, 117–138 CE.
- 66 Roueché 1993, no. 72, 16–21, first half of third century CE.
- 67 IG IV².1.86. For Lamprias and his extensive family see Spawforth 1985, 251–254.
- 68 IG IV².1.84.
- 69 Cf. Herberdey and Kalinka 1987, no. 67 where a deceased young athlete is described, in a more concise way, as *neanias kosmios*.
- 70 IG IV².1.86, 27–34.
- 71 IG IV².1.84, 34–37.
- 72 IG V.2.517, late second or third century CE.
- 73 IG II².3661, c. 235 CE.
- 74 For a discussion of this point in the context of anthropological literature see Dyck 2000b, 26–27.
- 75 E.g. Pind. *Ol.* 5, 15–16; *Ol.* 6, 9–11.
- 76 Bean 1965, no. 2; cf. SEG 30.1616, Cyprus, second/third century CE.
- 77 See Chapter 4.1.
- 78 *IvO* 54.
- 79 For techniques of the body and their internalization see Dyck and Archetti 2003, 7–10.
- 80 See the discussion in Robert 1967, 7–14.
- 81 Cf. IG XII.4.2.600, Kos, second half of first century CE, praising a former gymnasiarch for exhorting youths and *ephebes* towards *philoponia*.
- 82 IK *Sestos* 1, 38–39 and 71, 133–120 BCE.
- 83 IK *Priene* 69, 28–31.
- 84 IG II².1039, 12 and 49; IG II³.1290, 17; IG II³.1313, 48–49.
- 85 Gymnasiarch, IK *Sestos* 1, 82–83. Victor lists: Samos, IG XII.6.1.180, 6 c. 200 BCE; IG XII.6.1.183, 5 and 18, before mid-second century BCE; Delos, *ID* 1958, mid-second century BCE; Chalkis, SEG 29.806, late second century BCE; IK *Erythrai und Klazomenai* 81, c. 100 BCE. Honorary monument: Eretria, IG XII.9.282, first century BCE; Kos, *Iscr. di Cos* EV 5a, second century BCE. Gauthier and Hatzopoulos 1993, Face B, 54–57. For more ancient testimonia see Crowther 1991.
- 86 Gauthier and Hatzopoulos 1993, B, 56–57.
- 87 Crowther 1991; Gherchanoc 2016, 135–174; Kennell 2018.
- 88 Lazaridou 2015, ll. 73–103. An annual victor for each event was declared on the basis of the results of the monthly contests. Numerous officials, most notably the *ephebarch*, the gymnasiarch, the *paidonomos* and the *politarchai* were involved in the process of selecting the victors of these contests and commemorating them in public.
- 89 For *euxia* contests see Crowther 1985 and 1991.
- 90 IK *Erythrai und Klazomenai* 81, first century CE.
- 91 McGuire 1993.

- 92 *MDAI(A)* 33 (1908) 379.2, 24–25, 130s BCE.
- 93 *IG* XIV.256, 21–22.
- 94 *OGIS* 532, 14–16, 4/3 BCE.
- 95 *IGBulg* I².13, 48 BCE.
- 96 *IG* XII.5.129, 9–12.
- 97 *I.Kaunos* 17, 10.
- 98 *SIG* 708, 11, mid-first century BCE.
- 99 *SIG* 656, 19–20. Cf. *IK Priene* 68, col. XXIV, 80–81.
- 100 *IG* XII.3.249, 20 first century BCE. See also *IK Priene* 122, 14–15 (*philoponia* of secretary), c. 135 BCE; Delos, *ID* 1512, 11, end of second century BCE (*philoponia* of bard/poet).
- 101 *MDAI(A)* 32 (1907) 257, no. 8, col. II, 4–5 and 12.
- 102 *IK Kyzikos* 26.2, II.7.
- 103 For other aspects of this process see van Nijf 2001, 2003a and 2003b.
- 104 See Ma 2013 for a rich exploration of elite epigraphic and visual representations, power, and the construction of community landscapes and identities in Hellenistic cities. My objective in the present study is more restricted, as I attempt to trace and evaluate elite monumental dedications and representations of athletic achievements and their implications for the negotiation of civic power and social position. While I am in general in agreement with most conclusions reached by Ma, see also the comments by Ando 2014.
- 105 For the Aristomachos inscriptions see Ebert 1972, no. 78; Moretti 1953, no. 71; *I. Magnesia* 180 and 181. For the date of Aristomachos' victory in the Panathenaia see Shear 2012, 160.
- 106 *I. Magnesia* 180, 24–25.
- 107 Gouw 2009, 361–362, no. 122.
- 108 Schuler and Zimmermann 2012, no. 4.
- 109 *I. Miletus* I.3.127, 34, early imperial. For Nikophon see Moretti 1957, no. 735; *AP* 6.256. Cf. also *IGR* 3.500, Oinoanda, early third century CE, containing a detailed genealogy of Licinia Flavilla, inscribed on the sides of her sarcophagus. Some members of the family, stretching back several generations, are marked out as holders of political office (e.g. Lykiarchs, senators, proconsuls) and one as *pankration* victor in sacred games (V, 1–3) – see also following section.
- 110 *SEG* 39.1243.I, 6–7.
- 111 *MAMA* XI.26. See <http://mama.csad.ox.ac.uk/monuments/MAMA-XI-026.html> (accessed October 1, 2018) for edition and commentary.
- 112 Segre and Carratelli 1949–1951, no. 63.
- 113 *Clara Rhodos* 2 (1932) 193, no. 21, second century CE. See also *Clara Rhodos* 2 (1932) 196, no. 24, Hellenistic, for a victor at the Dioskoureia who then served as *phylarch* and secretary of the council.
- 114 Blinkenberg 1941, no. 707, dated 40–30 BCE.
- 115 *IK Rhodischen Peraia*, no. 553.
- 116 *TAM* III.1, 168, third century CE. See van Nijf 2011, 227.
- 117 *IGR* 3.500, IV.12–V.3.
- 118 Hall and Milner 1994, no. 30 = *SEG* 44.1194.
- 119 Victory in Euarestia, Hall and Milner 1994 no. 5 = *SEG* 44.1169, 231–232 CE. Victories in Meleagria, Hall and Milner 1994 nos. 30, 31 and 32 = *SEG* 44.1194, 1195 and 1196. Hall and Milner 1994 date the monuments that record Flavillianus' victories at the Meleagria and Euarestia in the men's age-group (*SEG* 44.1169, 1195 and 1196) to c. 230 CE, but that implies an unusually long (although not impossible) career between the same athlete's victories as a boy in the early 210s CE, the latter date deduced on the more securely dated *SEG*

- 44.1194 (victory as a boy at the Meleagreia) and IGR 3.500 (his father's inscribed mausoleum).
- 120 SEG 44.1196.
- 121 SEG 44.1169, 16–18. For a chronology of all known inscriptions dealing with Flavillianus see Milner 2011. For Flavillianus' life and family see also van Nijf 2001, 322–323 and 2003b, 268–269.
- 122 Milner 2011.
- 123 Milner 2011, ll. 3–5: “extraordinary athlete, member of the equestrian order, the most honorable and the first of the city.”
- 124 For a comparative analysis of this process see Goffman 1961.
- 125 Tiberius Claudius Hephæstion, IK *Tralleis* 75, first–second centuries CE; Tiberius Claudius Pollion, I. *Magnesia* 162.
- 126 Moretti 1953, nos. 1007–1010.
- 127 IK *Ephesos* 3016, Imperial period.
- 128 IK *Iasos* 115; Heberdey and Kalinka 1897, no. 67. Cf. Sayar 1998, no. 214, 9, first–second centuries CE, for Doras, a deceased athlete who is described as “the hope of his father and city”; IK *Smyrna* 517, first century BCE, for a deceased teenager honored as prize-winner in sprint-racing; IK *Smyrna* 467, Imperial period, for a deceased boy identified as a “wrestler”; IK *Smyrna* 552, first century CE, a deceased *ephebe* and participant in the activities of the *gymnasion*.
- 129 IK *Central Pisidia* 125, early third century CE.
- 130 For honorary epigraphic representation as a means to buttress intergenerational status claims and civic memory see also van Nijf 2000; Papakonstantinou 2018.
- 131 Reitzenstein 2014, no. 6, 571–576.
- 132 A similar situation seems to be implied in Bean 1965, no. 2, 54–58, a testimonial of a childhood friend attached to a first-century CE honorary decree for Marcus Alfidios, an athlete of international caliber.
- 133 TAM V.2.1017.
- 134 TAM V.2.1020.
- 135 TAM V.2.1018 and SEG 49.1699.
- 136 TAM V.2.1022.
- 137 TAM V.2.1019.
- 138 For the role of athletics in the educational systems of Greek cities, as well as the importance of sport in the construction of elite Greek cultural identities during the imperial period see van Nijf 1999; 2001; 2003a; 2003b; 2010.
- 139 MDAI(A) 33 (1908) 375.1, 11–12.
- 140 IK *Sestos* 1, 30 ff., c. 133–120 BCE.
- 141 Ll. 38–43: διὰ τῆς ἐαυτοῦ φιλοδοξίας, προτρεπόμενος εἰς ἄσκησιν καὶ φιλοπονίαν τοὺς νέους, ἀνθ' ὧν ὁ δῆμος, ἀποδεχόμενος αὐτοῦ τὸ φιλόσπουδον καὶ ἐκτενές, συνεχώρησεν μὲν αὐτῷ τὰς ἐπιγραφάς, ἡξίωσεν δὲ ἐπαίνου διὰ τῶν ψηφισμάτων, οἱ τε ἔφηβοι καὶ οἱ νέοι ἐστεφάνωσαν αὐτόν τε καὶ τὸν ἐφήβαρχον, ὧν ἀποδεξάμενος τὴν τιμὴν τῆς δαπάνης αὐτοὺς παρέλυσεν, τὰς δὲ τῶν ὅπλων ἀναθέσεις ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων ἐποίησατο (translation Austin 2006, no. 252, slightly modified).
- 142 Ll. 70–72: προτρεπόμενος δὲ διὰ τῆς τοιαύτης φιλοδοξία[ς] [π]ρὸς ἄσκησιν καὶ φιλοπονίαν τοὺς νέους, ἐξ ὧν αἱ τῶν νεωτέρων ψυχὰι πρὸς ἀνδρείαν ἀμυλλώμεγαί καλῶς ἄγονται τοῖς ἦθεσιν πρὸς ἀρετήν; ll. 74–76: προσηνέχθη δὲ φιλανθρώπως καὶ τοῖς τὰς ἀκροάσει[ς] ποιησαμένοις πᾶσιν, βουλόμενος καὶ ἐν τούτοις διὰ τῶν πεπαιδευμένων τὸ ἐνδοξον π[ε]ριτιθέναι τῇ πατρίδι, ἐπεμελήθη δὲ καὶ τῆς τῶν ἐφήβων καὶ νέων παιδείας.
- 143 Cf. IK *Priene* 69, 28–29, for literary studies and athletics in a *gymnasion*. Cf. IG XII.9.235, 9–13, Eretria, c. 100 BCE; IK *Mylasa* 909, 15–19; IK *Kalchedon* 32 for a funerary epigram of an 18-year-old *ephebe* highlighting literary education and

athletic competition. For further references and discussion see Scholz 2004; Kennell 2015, 176–178.

144 IK *Mylasa* 909, 5–9; *MDAI(A)* 33 (1908) 379.2, 21, Pergamon, 138–133 BCE. Cf. IK *Perge* 14, 69–70, second-first century BCE.

145 E.g. *SEG* 25.790, 16–19, Histria, second century BCE; IK *Perge* 14, 30–33.

Liminality, reflexivity and hybridity

Greek agonistic culture revolved primarily around the construction of masculinity. Even though Greek women had less opportunities to play sports, the evidence suggests that they did so with increasing frequency – although in overwhelmingly fewer numbers compared to men – during the Hellenistic and Imperial periods. Equally importantly, women hailing from the civic elite frequently became active in the sport culture of their communities through agonistic benefaction. Many women serving as gymnasiarchs and *agonothetai* for games, on their own or jointly with a male relative, enacted clauses in foundations that allowed less privileged women and members of other subaltern groups to join the activities of *gymnasia* and baths on special occasions. Through these acts of munificence, agonistic festivals could become powerful conduits of enculturation and social accommodation for members of subaltern groups, albeit temporarily. Women, slaves and other individuals of “inferior” legal statuses were invited to join the performative aspects of local festivals that aimed at presenting in the wider world an image of a hierarchical but cohesive and balance community. Agonistic festivals were also occasions of leisure, recreation and camaraderie, features that largely account for their surging popularity. Beyond this façade of civic orderliness that festivals exuded, we can detect a tapestry of intertwined and at times conflicting discourses. Therefore agonistic festivals and all their facets (e.g. banquets, processions) were also a main stage for playing out social tensions and achieving a symbiosis between distinct groups that were usually demarcated along age, gender or legal status lines. Greek agonistic festivals were, in other words, a balancing act between conflict and accommodation, the latter often achieved through acts of liminality and, more rarely, short-lived expressions of discontent.

The spread of Greek athletics coincided during the Imperial period with the emergence of a hybrid spectacle culture in many Greek-speaking communities. While Greek athletics made relatively few inroads in the western parts of the Roman empire, most notably in Italy, Roman spectacles spread far and wide in the Greek-speaking East. In many instances the evidence suggests that Greek spectators were as excited for gladiatorial fights and beast hunts as they were for the traditional Greek athletic contests. Moreover, even though Greek sport remained the focus of most civic benefactors, there are many known instances

of elites who eagerly sponsored both Greek and Roman-style sports. This partial fusion in the spectacle cultures is also apparent in the honorific discourse, styled very closely to the language used to eulogize Greek athletes, employed by gladiators and *venatores* in the Greek East.

This chapter explores these intertwined features of Greek sport – bodily performance, gendered representation and cultural hybridity – and attempts to trace their transformations in the *long durée* of the development of Greek sport.

I Greek *gymnasia* and agonistic festivals: conflict and accommodation

Ia The gymnasion as social space

Since ancient times, sport practices have had the capacity to intertwine and hybridize seemingly oppositional trends. As the authors of a recent account in the anthropology of sport noted, sport persistently fuses experiences such as “playfulness and seriousness, leisure and work, individualism and collectivism, pleasure and violence, hierarchy and equality, morality and corruption. These tensions are found with remarkable predictability in very different parts of the world and at radically different times in history.”¹ In the case of the ancient Greek world, the expansion of Greek sport culture during the late Hellenistic and Imperial periods and the particular conditions for the practice and ideology of sport that it generated, provides the backdrop in illuminating how sport could operate as a medium and agent for conflict, inclusion and accommodation. This expanding Greek sport culture can be measured in, primarily three, interrelated ways: a) by the growing corpus of evidence regarding the hundreds of new contests that were established in the Greek-speaking areas during this period, b) by the heightened visibility, in the epigraphic record as well as in the material remains of ancient cities, of sport-related institutions (e.g. the *ephebeia*) and venues (*gymnasion*, stadium) and c) by the emergence and consolidation of agonistic benefaction as a means of social distinction for civic elites as discussed in the preceding chapter, a process that largely fueled the flourish of competitive sport and *gymnasion* training at the local level.

Athletic training and competition venues have traditionally been prominent features of the civic landscape of Greek cities since at least the Classical period. During the Hellenistic and Imperial periods these sites retained their primary function, but also gradually became more integrated in the public and ceremonial life of their city through festivals and other civic performances. Even small communities had a rudimentary stadium and some games. *Gymnasia* were also ubiquitous and centrally positioned in the urban landscapes of Greek cities. Such *gymnasia* catered for the training needs of male citizens of all ages and select foreigners, the latter especially in the context of the *ephebeia*. Recent work on the *ephebeia* suggests that this well-established program for the training of adolescents was, in general, more inclusive than once thought, as it

admitted not only the scions of the richest families but also boys from middling social backgrounds.² The recently published ephebarchic law from Amphipolis largely confirms this conclusion as it specifies that enrollment in the local *ephebeia* was mandatory for all youths whose family worth in land, houses and animals was at least 30 *mnai*.³ However, and despite these recent scholarly advances, the overall picture regarding the social background of the usual habitués in Greek *gymnasia* during the Hellenistic and Roman era remains far from clear. This is a crucial issue in any attempt to evaluate the potential of the *gymnasion*, and sport in general, as an agent of conflict or broker of accommodation within Greek communities.

Assuming that most citizens – cf. the case of Hellenistic Veroia discussed in Chapter 4 – had the legal right to train in their city's *gymnasia* and compete in local games, the question then becomes whether members of the lowest socio-economic orders were actually encouraged by civic authorities and private benefactors to do so. Regarding training in the *gymnasion*, a first-century CE list of participants in the upper *gymnasion* in Thespiiai includes, among others, a lady, a certain Peitheros identified as a tanner, a painter Euphrosynos and an Euelpistos qualified as *demosios* (a slave?).⁴ In principle, however, the evidence that exists about the issue of participation of diverse groups in the activities of local *gymnasia* is ambivalent. In Kaunos, a Quintus Veditius Capito had served four times as gymnasiarch for people of all age-groups and social classes (πάσης ηλικίας καὶ τύχης).⁵ Should we read this literally and understand that non-elite citizens regularly trained in the *gymnasia* of Kaunos under the sponsorship of Capito? Or was this merely a periphrastic way of denoting Capito's boundless generosity, and hence one should not draw specific conclusions regarding the social composition of the trainees in the *gymnasia* of Kaunos?

On another occasion we even hear, in an inscription from Dorylaion, of a gymnasiarch "of free and slaves" (γυμνασίάρχος ἐλευθέρων καὶ δούλων) as well as a gymnasiarch of women (γυμνασίάρχος τῶν γυναικῶν).⁶ One has to distinguish at this point between the regular daily activities of a *gymnasion*, i.e. training for *ephebes* and athletes, and the special-occasion activities, e.g. banquets and comprehensive oil donations, that usually occurred during major civic festivals.⁷ Although a case can be made that in a small number of Greek communities members of subaltern groups, such as workers in manual low-prestige professions, women and even slaves, could partake in the regular activities of the *gymnasion*, in most cases their association with the main training venue of their city was restricted to special-occasion activities.⁸ It is likely therefore that in the case of Dorylaion, the references to gymnasiarchs for women and slaves probably allude to the temporary privileges, documented in other Greek cities of the Imperial period, regarding access to the *gymnasion* and the use of oil granted to women and slaves during civic festivals or other festive occasions.⁹

All these examples paint a picture of the Hellenistic and Imperial *gymnasion* that was habitually frequented, for the purposes of training or as part of a civic festival by male citizens of all ages, select non-citizens as well as, on special

occasions, women and slaves. Greek *gymnasia* during the Hellenistic and Roman periods, in other words, were relatively inclusive social spaces. In the ensuing section I will further explore, through a case study, this role of the *gymnasion* as a social space and as a setting for enacting integration and accommodation through sport. More specifically, I will examine the epigraphic evidence for the festivals for Zeus and Hekate in Imperial Stratonikeia, with a particular focus on the process of integrating women, slaves and other subaltern groups in the activities of the local *gymnasia*.

1b Agonistic festivals in Imperial Stratonikeia: euergetism and audience engagement

Greek agonistic festivals were popular occasions of communal worship, camaraderie and leisure. For Greek cities these festivals, especially the ones that attracted audiences from beyond the strict confines of the host city, were also an expedient means through which to articulate and represent to residents and the outside world critical constituents of their shared values and community history. In addition to their role as training venues and sites of memory, during those festivals the *gymnasion* and other athletic facilities became the focus of special events that aimed at presenting an image of co-existence and integration between the civic elites and other social groups, including ones of lower legal status. Civic festivals along with other publicly staged events were also liminal and reflexive sites – concepts that will be further elaborated in this chapter – of social agency. These multifaceted functions of agonistic festivals in general, and of the *gymnasion* in particular, are well illustrated in a rich epigraphic dossier, mostly of the Imperial period, from the city of Stratonikeia in Karia. Stratonikeia was founded in the third century BCE and its territory gradually grew so that by the mid-second century BCE it comprised surrounding villages with their sanctuaries, including the sanctuaries of Hekate in Lagina and Zeus in Panamara, located on opposite ends of the territory of the city-state of Stratonikeia. Even though other cults and sanctuaries are attested for Hellenistic and Imperial Stratonikeia, the sanctuaries and festivals for Hekate and Zeus were clearly the most important.¹⁰ In addition to the high number of inscriptions dealing with most aspects of the festivals for these two deities, the centrality of Zeus Panamaros and Hekate in the religious life of Stratonikeia is also suggested by the fact that in the Imperial period civic authorities had established a daily ritual of procession and hymn-singing to these two deities by a choir of thirty noble boys.¹¹

The majority of the extant inscriptions illuminating the operation of festivals in Stratonikeia honor local elites that had served as priests in one or both of the major sanctuaries. Especially during the Imperial period the priesthoods of Hekate and Zeus became the main avenue for the performance of civic euergetism. As a result, wealthy men and women that served in the priesthoods of Zeus or Hekate were eager to record their service and enumerate the diverse benefactions they bestowed to the city.¹²

The epigraphic record makes evident that already by the second century BCE these festivals were major regional events. They were conducted in a manner that engaged and connected, through processions and other rituals, the respective sanctuaries, the countryside as well as the urban center of Stratonikeia. The foundational story of the Panamareia was an epiphany of Zeus Panamaros who saved Stratonikeia from the invasions of Libanius in 40 BCE. During that festival the cultic statue of Zeus was brought from the sanctuary of Panamara to Stratonikeia's *bouleuterion* in an act reminiscent of the god's epiphany. Similar to other local festivals of the same era, the organizing authorities of the Stratonikeia festivals had translocal pretensions, expressed primarily through the attempts to integrate the most prominent ones into the growing network of internationally recognized sacred games. In the case of Stratonikeia, we are better informed regarding the successful attempts to re-launch and rebrand the festival of Hekate during the first century BCE. Following the grant of new territory to Stratonikeia as well as inviolability to the sanctuary of Hekate by Rome in 81 BCE, the festival of Hekate was re-organized and celebrated as a penteteric festival jointly with Goddess Roma. The Hekatesia-Romea included an athletic contest (*agon*) and the new arrangement was approved by over 65 cities, most of them located in mainland Greece and Asia Minor.¹³

The priests for the cults of Zeus and Hekate served annually and usually in male/female pairs, often consisting of husband and wife. Even though priests could act in a supervisory capacity for any issue related to the festivals under their remit, especially during the Imperial period the provision of the necessary financial resources for the organization and conduct of the festival, along with considerations regarding the social standing of the office holder, were clearly the main requirements/expectations of the position.¹⁴ Particularly important in that regard were the agonistic and recreational aspects of the festivals, i.e. athletic games, spectacles as well as food and monetary distributions. Euergetism was a competitive process and the social capital a benefactor accrued was usually commensurate to their spending. Inhabitants in small provincial cities like Stratonikeia had limited opportunities to engage in communal leisure activities, especially if they were not willing to travel far outside their city. Hence when such opportunities presented themselves residents much appreciated, and as time went by came to expect, that their civic leaders put up a complete package of entertainment with games, theatrical and musical performances, banquets as well as distributions of oil and money. The abundant epigraphical record of Stratonikeia allows us precious glimpses of these and other aspects of agonistic festivals in this city of Asia Minor during the Imperial period. Hence, by using agonistic festivals as an entry point, one can also use Imperial Stratonikeia as a case study with which to assess the micropolitics of power, social interaction and identify formation through sport and spectacle.

Although not many details survive regarding the athletic games of the Stratonikeian festivals, comparative evidence suggests that these games must have been a major attraction. As far as the Hekatasia are concerned, during the late

Hellenistic period the festival appears to have had a full athletic program in different age-groups, a fact that tallies with the diplomatic efforts of Stratonikeians, discussed above, to promote these games.¹⁵ It is likely that the Panamareia as well had a program with diverse athletic competitions, and that other established contests existed.¹⁶ Priests, some of whom had an athletic background, usually acted as *agonothetai* and defrayed most or all of the costs for these athletic contests.¹⁷ Quite often the same individuals also acted as *munerarii* while serving as high priests of the imperial cult. Gladiatorial fights and beast hunts are, in fact, well-attested in Imperial Stratonikeia primarily through the honorary inscriptions of the benefactors who sponsored them as well as through funerary monuments for deceased gladiators who fought in Stratonikeia.¹⁸

An example of a versatile benefactor of sport in Stratonikeia was T. Flavius Aeneas, a local notable active in the second century CE, who had served as ambassador to Rome and was self-styled as “loving his country” (φιλόπατρις) and “son of the city” (υἱός τῆς πόλεως).¹⁹ Both were common surplus-value titles that indicated a record of civic service and elevated social standing. Among his numerous benefactions Aeneas had served as priest of Zeus Panamaros and financed the athletic contest ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων, i.e. he shouldered the totality of the expenses without any contributions from another benefactor, an established foundation or the civic treasury.²⁰ The same Aeneas also produced gladiatorial shows and beast hunts while serving as high-priest.²¹ On yet a different occasion Aeneas financed ἀκροάματα, i.e. musical and theatrical performances that were held during a major festival.²²

Such performances were a familiar and popular occurrence in local festivals during the Imperial period, hence priests–benefactors were often eager to sponsor them as well. A pair of priests for Hekate during the Imperial period proudly noted in their honorary inscription that they defrayed all the expenses for high-quality entertainments (ἀκροάματα) which, during the festival days, were performed throughout the day and sometimes well into the night.²³ Even though the main objective of these benefactors was to produce a spectacular festival with an abundance of entertainments and distributions, very often their generosity in sponsoring spectacles and entertainments extended beyond the duration of a festival. Thus a husband and wife who had served jointly in the priesthood of Hekate during the Imperial period paid for travelling performers throughout the year, including for the duration of the Hekatesia festival.²⁴ Another pair of priests at the Panamareia paid for a pantomime dancer (ὄρχηστήν) and other performances, as well as for *venationes*, the latter while serving in the high priesthood of the imperial cult.²⁵

A great amount of funding provided by the priests was directed towards activities in the city’s *gymnasia*. The *gymnasia* were, in fact, so integrated into the fabric of the festivals that priests very often assumed the title and responsibilities of a *gymnasiarchos* for the duration of the most important festival of their priesthood (ιερεὺς μετὰ γυμνασιαρχίαν). These were, in other words,

short-term *gymnasiarchiai* that lasted only a few days but that were prominently recorded by members of the elite serving as priests because of the exorbitant expenses involved.²⁶ Often these festival *gymnasiarchiai* were extended beyond the duration of a festival as the priests stretched their generosity. The Panamareia festival, for instance, lasted ten days and many priests served as gymnasiarchs for its entire duration.²⁷ However, Claudius Ulpius Aelius Asklepiades and his wife, Ulpia Aelia Plautilla, who served as priests of Zeus Panamaros, proudly declared that they were the first to extend their Panamareia *gymnasiarchia* from 10 to 30 days.²⁸ At a later date another pair of priests of Zeus Panamaros provided entertainments, gifts and services for a total of 34 days on the occasion of the Panamareia.²⁹ For the festivals of Hekate and Hera we hear of *gymnasiarchiai* undertaken by the priests of these cults lasting 22 days, and on one known occasion a pair of priests for Hekate served as gymnasiarchs for 32 days.³⁰ Because Stratonikeia included in its territory several smaller settlements, it was also important to spread out the generosity spatially. A pair of gymnasiarchs for Hekate served for two days as gymnasiarchs “in the city,” i.e. in the urban center in Stratonikeia, during the procession of the key (*kleidophoria*), a central ritual in the festival of Hekate, as well as “the usual number of days” in the vicinity of the sanctuary of Hekate in Lagina.³¹

The language used for describing these *gymnasiarchiai* is indicative of the expectations that the festival participants had from these wealthy donors, as well as of the nature of the services provided to the community. Tiberius Flavius Artemisios and Claudia Flavia Tatias Eupraxias, a pair of priests at the temple of Hera are described as performing their *gymnasiarchia* for the Hekatesia from “night to night” in both *gymnasia* as well as in the area around the temple.³² But what exactly did these festive *gymnasiarchiai* consist of? The provision of abundant quantities of anointing oil was a priority. Ideally, priests–gymnasiarchs strove to provide an uninterrupted supply of oil in the city’s *gymnasia* and baths during day and night, as apparently Artemisios and Flavia Tatias did.³³ Publius Aelius Hekatomnos, a priest of Zeus Panamaros and gymnasiarch for the duration of the festival, is also described as providing unlimited quantities of fine-quality oil in basins that were incessantly accessible during day and night.³⁴ Moreover, gymnasiarchs with annual tenures at times served during festivals, invariably with additional provisions and at an extra cost. Hence a group of father and sons gymnasiarchs typically provided fine quality oil in basins in the baths and the *gymnasion* “liberally and luxuriously” throughout the day and for the most part of the night and invited male citizens as well as resident Romans and visitors to partake of their generosity. During festival days oil availability was extended by these gymnasiarchs to all residents regardless of age or status, including women.³⁵ On occasion, and in addition to oil, priests also made available unguents and perfumes, i.e. scented oil.³⁶ It goes without saying that such largesse came at a great expense for the priests. Most readers of these honorary inscriptions would have been aware of that, and in extraordinary circumstances specifics about the cost were advertised in

honorary monuments as in the case of M. Sempronius Aruncius Theodotus and Sempronia Aruncia, priests of Zeus Panamaros, who provided oil for 34 days at a time when, due to a bad crop, the cost of a jar of oil had risen to 1,000 denarii.³⁷

A most crucial question concerns the accessibility to these oils, unguents and perfumes that priests-gymnasiarchs so liberally donated. According to the honorary inscriptions civic elites performed their duties as priests and gymnasiarchs *πάσῃ τύχῃ καὶ ἡλικίᾳ*, i.e. to the benefit of all individuals regardless of age, social position or legal status.³⁸ In practical terms that meant that virtually everyone who attended the festival could walk into a *gymnasion* or other designated locations (usually the baths or a temple) and take advantage of the oil and other offerings. That included a host of individuals who would not normally have access to the regular operations of the *gymnasion*, i.e. the athletic and ephebic training. Hence in addition to adolescent and adult males of citizen status, visiting foreigners, dwellers in neighboring communities (*perioikoi*) and even women and at times slaves were the recipients of these benefactions.³⁹ Especially regarding women and slaves, honorary inscriptions are forthcoming in providing details of the gifts and distributions provided to them, undoubtedly because benefaction that was customized towards these groups was unusual and occurring only on special festive days. In one case Tiberius Flavius Aeneas and Flavia Paulina, priests and gymnasiarchs of Zeus Panamaros, made available oil and perfumes to all women at the Heraion, invited all free and slave women to a feast with abundant wine and gave to each of them three *drachmai*.⁴⁰ In most cases women received the oil donated by priests in the female baths.⁴¹ As in other cities, we also hear of a gymnasiarch for women in Stratonikeia, a term that denotes the official who underwrote all the expenses related to the provision of oil, banquets and other related gifts to women during festivals. The only individual claiming that title in the Stratonikeia record, Hegemonis Apphion, clearly regarded as one of her main duties the donation of oil, perfumes and the best quality unguents during the Zeus festival. During the Heraia festival she also paid for a banquet and a monetary donation to each of the women, of free and slave statuses, that attended the festival.⁴²

Of special note are the banquets held for women, as well as for men, in a very inclusive manner that reflected the principles behind the distributions of oil and gifts. While serving as priest of Hera and annual gymnasiarch T. Claudius Kyrinas provided an all-women banquet at the Heraion for citizens, Romans, visiting foreigners, *paroikoi* and many slaves.⁴³ The same priest/gymnasiarch also provided a banquet in the Komyrion temple for the respective male groups, i.e. citizens, Romans, visiting foreigners, *paroikoi*, slaves. However, on other occasions men and women probably dined together, as the wording in some honorary inscriptions suggests.⁴⁴ The *gymnasia* of Stratonikeia, with their spacious courtyards, were ideal venues for hosting banquets. We are in fact aware that during festival days on occasion *gymnasia* doubled as dining halls for community banquets.⁴⁵ Depending on

the arrangements made by the benefactors and the civic authorities, women were also invited to join the banquets hosted in *gymnasia*.⁴⁶

The major agonistic festivals of Stratonikeia were therefore comprehensive civic performances that afforded to their audiences the opportunity to savor diverse entertainments and receive gifts. Even though strict patriarchal and citizenship restrictions normally forbade the involvement of most women and other persons of subaltern status in the institutional aspects of public life, during festivals all residents and visitors, including those of lower social and legal status, were encouraged and expected to partake actively in the festivities. The *gymnasia*, the venues of athletic training, took center stage in these proceedings especially through the distribution of oil, a practice that was almost synonymous with their operation. In other words, the *gymnasia* of Stratonikeia, venues that as comparative evidence suggests normally enforced strict admission rules, were transformed for the duration of the major agonistic festivals from venues of restricted access to free civic spaces in which intermingling and interaction between individuals of diverse genders, ages and social standings was the norm.⁴⁷

1c Greek agonistic festivals: liminality and accommodation

Greek agonistic festivals were multifaceted cultural forms that have traditionally been understood in the light of the functionalist interpretative paradigm. The role of the civic elites in sponsoring these festivals has been explored at length, as is their practice of manipulating festivals' content to their own advantage. Festivals and their various component rituals are also widely understood as reflective of dominant values, i.e. as a mirror image of the organizing community to herself and the world. In a recent study on Hellenistic festival processions, for instance, it is argued that

the regulations concerning Hellenistic processions correspond exactly to important contemporary civic values, precisely the values that we encounter in honorary decrees for citizens and magistrates and in texts concerning the education in the gymnasium. In this respect, Hellenistic processions are reflections of Hellenistic values and Hellenistic "Zeitgeist."⁴⁸

Agonistic festivals and other civic rituals are therefore often interpreted as imposing on citizens and other audiences the paramount realities of a city and beyond, i.e. a set of dominant beliefs and assumptions that enabled social agents to create meaning of their lives outside the strict confines of festivals.⁴⁹ In this manner, agonistic festivals were an organizing medium of localized trust relations between community members.⁵⁰

Viewed in this light, processions, banquets, festivals and other occasions of community performance and leisure are still perceived as sources of pleasure for participants. But, to quote a comparable assessment of modern bourgeois

festivities, in such occasions “pleasure becomes an object of manipulation, until it finally perishes in the administrative arrangements.”⁵¹ In other words, according to such views civic festivals, steeped in tradition, were repetitive and routinized, and constituted central acts of revertible time, i.e. they acted as a conceptual mechanism whereby the past was used as an organizing principle of the present and future as well as a means of societal reproduction.⁵² All in all, a set of interpretations in which the institutional aspects of public performances outweigh the symbolic and ludic ones.

Contrary to their reflective aspects the reflexive and dialectical facets of Greek sport and festivals, which are often symptomatic of conflicting discourses, have received much less scholarly attention.⁵³ I propose that models of leisure practices and behavior developed outside the field of Classics might be apposite in that regard. M. Bakhtin’s discussion of carnival as adumbrated in the works of Rabelais and other Renaissance and early modern literary figures, for instance, focuses on the hedonistic and socially subversive aspects of this immensely popular cultural ritual.⁵⁴ Renaissance carnival and other festive forms bear close parallels to Greek agonistic festivals. Both, for instance, occurred during a suspension of the coercive socioeconomic and political establishment. Moreover, carnival was a time of license and exhilaration of the working classes that often encouraged practices that were critical, in an allusive but unmistakable way, to social hierarchies and the established moral order. Especially germane is Mikhail Bakhtin’s description of the emotive understanding of the individual and collective body during a carnival:

This festive organization of the crowd must be first of all concrete and sensual. Even the pressing throng, the physical contact of bodies, acquires a certain meaning. The individual feels that he is an indissoluble part of the collectivity, a member of the people’s mass body. In this whole the individual body ceases to a certain extent to be itself; it is possible, so to say, to exchange bodies, to be renewed (through change of costume and mask). At the same time the people became aware of their sensual, material bodily unity and community.⁵⁵

Moreover, the metamorphosis of the individual body and the intense realization of a collective and self-aware body during festive days that Bakhtin describes must have been present also in Greek festivals, especially during the post-Classical periods when opportunities for communal political agency were rather limited. Overall, even though this ritualized subversive behavior did not normally result in radical changes of the normative framework that dictated patterns of life for the rest of the year, carnival behavior was a crucial constituent in a dialectic that challenged deeply rooted orthodoxies. Indeed, such views of Renaissance and early modern carnivals have much in common with the understanding of public performances in the field of cultural anthropology.⁵⁶

In this tradition empirical and discursive genres of cultural performance are routinely viewed not as a simple mirror to society but as a series of interfacing mirrors that catalyze the processes of self-knowledge production and the use of resources (e.g. wealth) as means of exercising power. Even though such processes might appear overwhelmingly skewed – the byproduct of the unequal access to means of representation in the extant source material (e.g. honorary inscribed monuments) – in favor of some social groupings in reality, as social scientists often point out, they are usually conducted in a more dialectical manner: “all forms of dependence offer some resources whereby those who are subordinate can influence the activities of their superiors.”⁵⁷ It is critical that in the mode of analysis advocated here the roles of actor and audience intermesh, a condition that favors a negotiation rather than a top-down imposition of values and ideology. Especially relevant for our purposes are the concepts of public liminality and liminal spaces as elaborated by anthropologist Victor Turner, concepts that are highly expedient in interpreting the agonistic festivals of Stratonikeia, and by extension the festivals of most other Greek or Hellenized cities of the ancient world. According to Turner (original emphasis):

The dominant genres of performance in societies at all levels of scale and complexity tend to be *liminal phenomena*. They are performed in privileged spaces and times, set off from the periods and areas reserved for work, food and sleep. You can call these “sacred” if you like, provided that you recognize that they are the scenes of play and experimentation, as much as solemnity and rules. Western views of ritual have been greatly influenced by Puritanism. At any rate both the performances and their settings may be likened to loops in a linear progression, when the social flow bends back on itself, in a way does violence to its own development, meanders, inverts, perhaps lies to itself, and puts everything so to speak into the subjunctive mood as well as the reflexive voice. Just as the subjunctive mood of the verb is used to express supposition, desire, hypothesis, or possibility, rather than stating actual facts, so do liminality and the phenomena of liminality dissolve all factual and commonsense systems into their components and “play” with them in ways never found in nature or in custom, at least at the level of direct perception.⁵⁸

Leisure theorists have also emphasized the liminal and reflexive nature of sport and recreational activities.⁵⁹ According to Chris Rojek, “by allowing and encouraging the individual to stand outside the ordinary flow of collective values, axioms and conventions, leisure in liminal settings is culturally transformative.”⁶⁰ Leisure practices conducted in liminal contexts are therefore active commentaries on society in the form of performances that encourage ambiguity, the temporary suspension of normative structures and the emergence of anti-structures. Such practices can challenge, and temporarily transform, normative identities, hierarchies and values. If we turn from practices to space,

the related concept of “action spaces,” developed by Erving Goffman, also corresponds to the nature and function of *gymnasia*, stadia, assembly meeting locations and other public/institutional venues of Greek cities that were temporarily transformed into sites of performance of social rituals, most prominently of agonistic festivals.⁶¹ On these occasions such action spaces relaxed statutory rules of admission/participation and opened up to subjective and potentially uncertain situations by encouraging the intermingling (what Goffman calls “fancy milling”) of people of different genders, ages and statuses. Those of lower status (slaves, women, foreign visitors) engaged in vicarious role-play by participating in practices (e.g. oil distribution, civic banquets, or even competitive sport) that, under normal circumstances, were barred from.

Practices similar to the ones attested in Stratonikeia, especially in connection with the inclusion of slaves and women in oil distributions, banquets and other facets of agonistic festivals are attested in other parts of the Greek world under Roman rule. In Chapter 4 I discussed in some detail the foundation of Phaenia Aromation, which included specific provisions for bestowing oil to slaves at the *gymnasion* during festive occasions. The foundation also included an infringement clause against potentially negligent officials in case they failed to provide the oil to slaves, a reminder that such extraordinary grants were ideologically opposed by some quarters of the civic body.⁶² Similarly, in Didyma women (as well as boys) regularly received oil, banquets and distributions during a number of festivals including the Anoigmoi *panegyris*, a liminal festival that has been interpreted as a set of rite of passage rituals from childhood to youth, as well as during the festival for Artemis Pythie and the Megala Didymeia.⁶³ In the case of the Anoigmoi a local benefactor provided during the festival oil to women in all the baths, and we hear of other instances of distributions to young girls and women.⁶⁴ Moreover, two inscriptions refer to priestesses (*hydroforoi*) of Artemis Pythie as performing a *kosmos* ritual for women and girls followed, in one instance, by a fragmentary reference to a gathering (*ekklesia*) of women, possibly an allusion to a women’s banquet or some other liminal ritual event on the occasion of a festival.⁶⁵ Regarding the inclusion of visitors and other foreigners in the distributions of oil, it is widely attested in the epigraphic record, at least as far as special festive occasions were concerned.⁶⁶ The admission of non-citizens in *ephebeia* programs is also well-documented.⁶⁷

Similar to practices, spaces can also be transformed and acquire a transient liminal character. For instance, in many cases during agonistic festivals the *gymnasion* was ritually transformed from venue *par excellence* of athletic training and construction of dominant masculinities to a location that hosted performances, e.g. banquets and oil distributions for non-citizens, women and slaves, that encouraged public subjunctivity and the creation of antistructures and alternative identities. In addition to civically sanctioned and elite-sponsored liminal occasions of leisure, assemblies, funerals and possibly other occasions where large crowds assembled had the potential to turn into antistructures that questioned the *status quo*. Such public occasions could easily be transformed

into a platform of expressing disquietude and disaffection with the civic order that local elites promoted through entertainments, festivals and other ceremonies.⁶⁸ In one case, a fragmentary inscription for an unknown high-born lady from Imperial Knidos reveals how, on the occasion of her funeral, the people assembled in the theater and proceeded to snatch her body and bury her, by popular acclamation, *intra muros*.⁶⁹ In another instance in Imperial Kaunos the *demos* was presented as being seized with grief at the passing of the local notable Agreophon.⁷⁰ In a communal, and one can assume extempore, gathering with the council the people unanimously clamored in favor of a public funeral. The narratives in both of these inscriptions are sanitized of any elements or even hints of social rupture. In the case of Knidos the spontaneous reaction of the crowd was presented by the family of the deceased and the civic authorities as a token of recognition of her virtue and reputation, while in Kaunos the people's behavior is attributed to the multitude of generous benefactions and services that Agreophon and his father before him had performed.⁷¹ Yet it is evident that such occasions of unrehearsed public gatherings were ripe for the articulation of alternative and even militant discourses. Indeed by their very constitution events that deviated from the institutional script and assumed a spontaneous flow stood on the edge of everyday life and challenged established categories. On such occasions, interaction, negotiation and at times even resistance went hand in hand with relief from daily labor, pleasurable recreation and the expression of group identities and pride.

Agonistic festivals, therefore, afforded days of collective civic merriment and interpersonal interaction that were accomplished, according to the emphatic and eulogizing tone adopted by honorary monuments, under the aegis of the munificent civic elite, but which also provided a stage for the potential challenge of embedded categories and identities. In all these occasions civic authorities and elite benefactors employed key athletic venues, including civic *gymnasia*, and practices (e.g. anointing with oil) to display an image of a welcoming and magnanimous community. Such a representation was very expedient both in the Hellenistic world of closely intertwined and inter-dependent communities, leagues and kingdoms as well as during the period of Roman control when a delicate balance of power between dependent communities and the central authority had to be maintained. Ultimately, allowing non-citizens, women and slaves to partake for a restricted period of time of prominent symbols of citizenship and dominant masculinity had the effect of reinforcing a sense of *Gemeinschaft* and a particular template of civic life. This template dictated that athletic training and its iconic practices, including anointing the body with oil, was in principle limited to a class of men who, by birthright or special dispensation, were educated in the *gymnasion* and then went on to dominate the public life of their cities. As argued in Chapter 5, in addition to articulating this ideological *esprit de corps* gymnasial education, athletic training and competition was crucial for the literal fashioning of the orthodox and dominant somatic qualities of men who shared a certain set of values and largely represented their communities in their interactions with the outside world. In the

case of Stratonikeia, honorary monumental inscriptions, produced at the command and to the liking of the same elite that expended their resources in benefactions, portray the Stratonikeia games, *gymnasia* and festivals in a manner that glosses over all conflicts and grievances that, as comparative evidence suggest, must have existed in the implementation of such complex programs of rituals and entertainments. The honorific narrative reflected a set of carefully crafted and staged civic performances that presented to residents of Stratonikeia and to the outside world a rigidly stratified but balanced community. Cult and sport, two inextricable and powerful Greek cultural signifiers, were in this case employed most effectively to promote and represent, to a certain extent misleadingly, to contemporaries and future readers of the commemorative inscriptions, a pious, prosperous, effectively governed and socially harmonious community.

Furthermore, most of the epigraphic documents that refer to various aspects of the organization of agonistic festivals indirectly emphasize the liminal character of these occasions, especially the fact that these were temporary arrangements that involved an inversion of roles that would not normally be encountered in the daily routine of these cities. What did people at the receiving end of this elite generosity thought of the temporary civic accommodation and suspension of certain rules that the content of the civic festivals afforded them? All the evidence suggests that members of subaltern groups consciously, and perhaps enthusiastically, engaged with the symbols and spaces of normative cultural and civic status habitually open only to male citizens (sport, *gymnasia*, oil), possibly in an attempt to assimilate to the powerful triad of Hellenicity, athleticism and religiosity. Moreover, we have no reason to disbelieve that women, slaves, village-dwellers as well as other individuals of subaltern status actually looked forward to and genuinely enjoyed some leisure time filled with games, banquets and gifts. That, to be sure, could not disguise their usual life conditions and the fact that these short-lived handouts made even more emphatic their inferior and in many ways beholden position vis-à-vis the euergetic elite. A complementary interpretation/motive for the large-scale involvement of subaltern groups in agonistic festivals is that women, slaves, *perioikoi* and other residents of lower legal status who were deprived of a formal share in civic governance, joined in the activities of the *gymnasion*, banquets and processions during festive occasions in an attempt to validate and assert, albeit temporarily and essentially vicariously, a more central role in civic life by consorting with full-citizens in venues that were normally not easily accessible to them. In the words of Victor Turner, many of the lower legal status festival participants were “in need of rich subjunctive compensation for the limited scope of their indicative lives.”⁷²

2 Femininity and the athletic ethos

In the following sections I would like to explore aspects of hybridization of Greek sport practices and representation during the Imperial period, and suggest some of the impact of this hybridizing process for the construction of identities. With regard to cultural forms hybridization can be defined as “the

ways in which forms become separated from existing practices and recombine with new forms in new practices.⁷³ Change and adaptation is the rule in every long-lived organism, institution or cultural form, and Greek sport was no exception. I suggest that by the Imperial period changes in the perception and representation of Greek sport were more readily intermeshed with practices and concepts – such as femininity and Romanization – that were traditionally considered separate from the world of the staunchly Hellenic and masculine ethos of Greek athletics. Hence the concept of hybridity/hybridization, which can help us make new sense of some manifestations of Greek sport in the vast expanse of the Greek-speaking regions of the Roman empire.

In this light, in the present section I would pick up the thread from the preceding segment and continue with the general theme of the dialectic between women and Greek sport, prominent aspects of which (distributions of oil, occasional participation in *gymnasion* activities, sponsorships of sport-related practices through the tenure of liturgical offices) I have already discussed in the preceding section, especially in connection with the city of Stratonikeia during the Imperial period. The focus of the ensuing discussion will be the discursive and pictorial representations of women in Greek or Hellenized cities of the Roman empire, and the extent to which such representations were affected by the dominant athletic ethos of *gymnasion* training and athletic competition. Section 3 will be devoted to a discussion of aspects of hybridization in the co-existence of Greek and Roman-style sports and spectacles.

We may begin our discussion with the honorary inscription for an unknown local benefactress and office-holder from Miletus.⁷⁴ The grand lady in question, certainly a member of one of the city's wealthiest families, could showcase an impeccable résumé of civic services: chief priestess of the Augusti, *stephane-phoros* (i.e. eponymous magistrate) of the city, gymnasiarch of the youths, gymnasiarch of adults, gymnasiarch of citizens, *paidonomos*, sponsor of numerous services, *agonothetis* of the Kommodeia festival, priestess of the Pythian Artemis, priestess of the Kabeiri, exemplary public servant, and possibly more. Most of the services were directly related to sport (*agonothesia*, multiple *gymnasiarchiai*) and the religious life of the city. As the preceding discussion of cases of elite euergetism in Stratonikeia also demonstrates, in terms of the public services and benefactions undertaken the record of this lady would have matched up nicely vis-à-vis other women emanating from the civic elite as well as prominent male benefactors of her time.⁷⁵

Hence at the time the honorary inscription from Miletus was commissioned female office-holding and agonistic benefaction, although still a minority occurrence, was nonetheless a recognizable phenomenon. But the process through which these practices came to be regarded as an acceptable facet of civic life is far from clear. What conditions in the history and development of Greek sport made it acceptable for women during the Imperial period to assume such a visible role in agonistic administration and benefaction? What did it mean for the women in question to be in the public eye as agonistic

benefactors? What were the most prominent ways of representing, rhetorically and iconographically, women's engagement with agonistic euergetism? Last but not least, what were some of the wider implications of the link between women and sport for general perceptions and depictions of womanhood during the period in question?

It is a cliché – and an accurate one – that in the ancient world women did not have the same opportunities for public exposure as men. This assertion, to be sure, must be qualified by chronology and social class: during the Imperial period elite women – i.e. the wives, daughters, sisters of male members of civic elites – had more opportunities for holding offices, providing benefactions and engaging with the public sphere in numerous other ways than men of lower economic or legal status. Still, even with these qualifications in mind, dissonances with the portrayal of elite men are not hard to find. It was, for instance, far more common for elite men to be praised, honored and have their achievements, at times spanning several decades, commemorated while still alive. Women, on the other hand, typically received honors in the immediate aftermath of the performance of a benefaction or the tenure of an office – cf. the instances from Stratonikeia explored in detail in the previous section – but the overall assessment of their lives was usually undertaken posthumously.

The main question guiding the ensuing discussion is whether, and if yes to what extent, the all-pervasive network of sport practices and ideology influenced the way women perceived and represented themselves? In previous chapters I have argued that in cities throughout the Greek-speaking world elite men represented themselves as having been equipped – literally, embodied – during their *gymnasion*-training days with the necessary character and somatic attributes. In later stages of their lives members of the civic elite were expected to demonstrate and employ the same attributes in their capacities as statesmen and benefactors. This was a very powerful and omnipresent model that was adapted and partially adopted for the discursive and pictorial representations of women. The major dissonance with the public commemoration of the lives of men was that for women – even regarding public office holders and generous benefactresses of Greek cities during the Imperial period – family relationships and “domestic” qualities were still presented as central in the construction of femininity.

The tone of public, especially epigraphic, discourses on women depended to a large extent to whether the honoree was still alive. In Imperial Chios Hedeia, a multiple and habitual benefactress who had served four times as gymnasiarch and *agonothetis* for numerous games, was dubbed as “loving her country” (φιλόπατρις), a sobriquet regularly assigned to male benefactors as well.⁷⁶ In addition to civic distinction epithets, honorary inscriptions for elite women who performed public services frequently incorporated references to character and domestic/familial qualities. In Selge Aurelia Xenoniane was honored for her service as *agonothetis* in various agonistic festivals as well as for her prudence and her love for her husband (φιλανδρία) and children (φιλοτεκνία).⁷⁷

In posthumous monuments for women who did not perform any benefactions or held any offices the emphasis is entirely on character and domestic qualities. Hence once again motherhood was usually emphasized, as well as a woman's affection and loyalty to her husband and other kin. Elite women are often depicted as models in such character qualities as well as in familial and domestic attributes, including household management.⁷⁸ In many cases such women were formally honored by their cities with decrees and/or statues on the strength of their character alone, despite the fact that they had not performed any benefactions or undertaken any other public duties. A posthumously erected statue of the Imperial period from Iasos, endorsed by the *demos*, the council and the *gerousia* of the city, honored Servaea Metrodora Tatia, a scion of a prominent local family.⁷⁹ The inscription that accompanied the statue emphasized how the deceased lived her life in virtue and morality and points to her affection towards her husband (φιλανδρία). Posthumous monuments for elite women also attempted to inscribe the deceased – this time in keeping with honorific practices for men – in a long and distinguished line of ancestors. Again regarding Metrodora from Iasos her statue-base inscription refers to three generations of the family as well as the “unsurpassed distinction” with which her ancestors had served the city. On rare occasions the honors bestowed to elite deceased women could extend beyond the usual honorary decree and statue. In early Imperial Kyzikos the *demos* and the Romans engaged in business in the city granted numerous posthumous honors to a certain Apollonis, including a city-wide mourning period and a grand procession – a one-off liminal occasion – for her funeral. Boys, young girls, *ephebes* and all other free men and women, irrespective of citizenship, were invited to participate in these activities.⁸⁰

Women were also praised for their character and service in terms reminiscent of the athletic laudatory discourse current in the Imperial period. In Magnesia on the Meander Iouliane was honored for her tenure of various offices and priesthoods, including chief priestess of Asia, a title that she held “first among the women” (πρώτην τῶν γυναικῶν).⁸¹ The same surplus-value title, common in its masculine form among athletes, was awarded to other female office-holders and benefactors, e.g. a *stephanephoros* and dedicator of an aqueduct from Priene as well as a βασιλεύσασα and dedicator of a bath in Assos.⁸² There are also many instances of women being designated as the “first and only” or the “best” among their gender to achieve a certain public office or undertake a particular and financially burdensome liturgy, or simply exhibit superlative character qualities. In Erythrai, Euthymia Hira was the first and only (πρώτην καὶ μόνην) among women in her city to hold the *gymnasiarchia* and provide oil from tubs during the entire day for a year.⁸³ In Didyma, Theogonis was recorded as the “only and first” (μόνη καὶ πρώτη) woman to finance a water-supply and sewage construction project with her parents and brother.⁸⁴ In Thasos, a Flavia Uevia Sabina was honored as the “only and first of all time” of her gender to receive honors identical to the members of the local *gerousia*.⁸⁵ Even this superlative surplus-value title was at times enhanced as “first and only

of all time” (ἀπ’ αἰῶνος), again appropriating well-known agonistic terminology.⁸⁶

A similar influence from motifs prevalent in athletics and subsequent hybridization of the public commemorative discourse for women can also be detected in female funerary monuments of the late Hellenistic and Imperial periods. Many funerary stelai contain reliefs that portray or allude to a wide range of activities in the life of the deceased, e.g. everyday usage personal material items, domestic accouterments, parting scenes from loved ones. The choice of material items portrayed corresponds to the idealized versions of various “personae” assumed by the deceased during her lifetime. Depending on her social status and age of the deceased, these personae could include, but were not limited to, daughter, wife, mother, priestess or officeholder. A common feature in many of these funerary stelai is the honorary wreath, an item that was popularized by athletics and eventually became in the Greek world the most recognizable signifier of achievement and distinction. Especially during the Hellenistic and Imperial periods honorary wreaths were awarded to both men and women for public services, and are frequently depicted in relief stelai for athletes as well as male public figures and benefactors.⁸⁷ It is a reasonable assumption, reinforced by iconography, that in many cases the wreaths depicted in stelai corresponded to real wreaths awarded by civic authorities or other groups to the honorees.⁸⁸ The fact that the wreath or crowning motif was also enlisted to commemorate individuals, including women, who had not performed any memorable services to their cities testifies to the cultural clout and pervasiveness of this athletic symbol.

Regarding the representation and commemoration of deceased women, the wreath as iconographic motif was especially popular in some Asia Minor cities, e.g. Prusa ad Olympum and Smyrna.⁸⁹ A funerary stele from Smyrna for Zosime praised the deceased for her rectitude and portrayed in relief five wreaths dedicated by the *demos*, the *gerousia*, the *boule*, the *neoi* and the *ephebes*.⁹⁰ This suggests a public persona replete with benefactions, most likely also including service and sponsorship of a *gymnasion*. In other cases, iconography points towards domestic qualities, especially in the case of younger women. Thus in the grave stele for Tation from Hadrianeia a large wreath is flanked by a perfume bottle and a comb, suggestive of the age and inclinations of this, possibly young, unmarried girl.⁹¹ The commemorative stele for Nymphe and Prepousa, two sisters from Prusa ad Olympum is dominated by two large wreaths, each encircling a comb.⁹² The relief also depicts two mirrors, two wool baskets and two wool spindles and distaffs, all arranged symmetrically. Such domestic tokens of comeliness and industry are commonly depicted with wreaths.⁹³ However, at times only a wreath is portrayed thus summarily portraying a life that was worth crowning, replete with conventional “female” virtue and prudence – see, for instance, the second/third century CE funerary stele for Chreste (Figure 6.1).

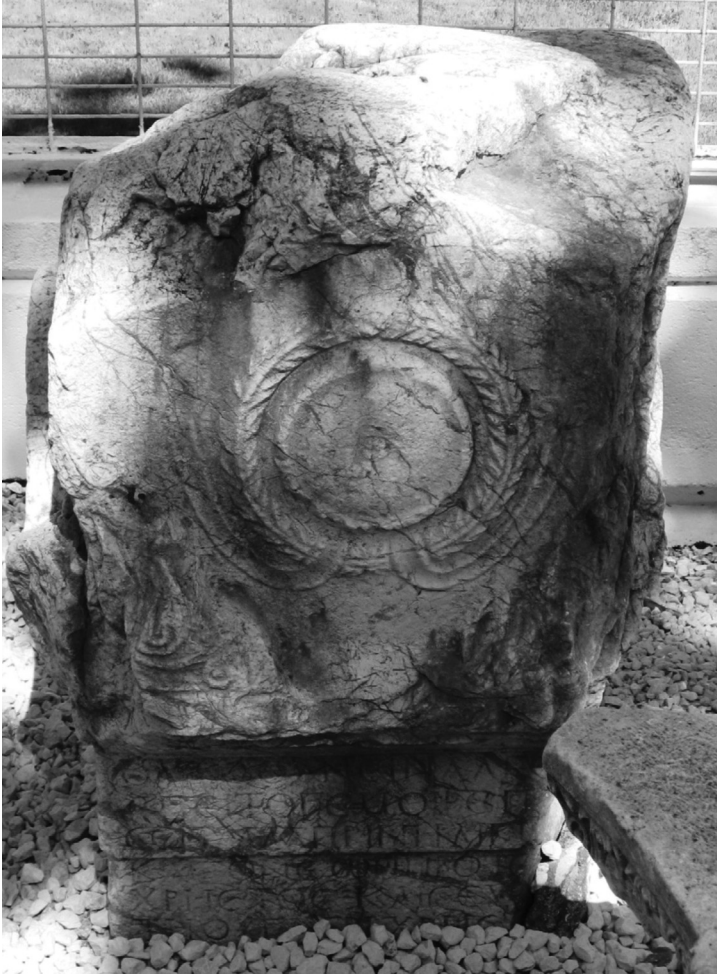


Figure 6.1 IK Prusa ad Olympum 55 (Bursa museum, Inv. 2522). Funerary stele for Chreste with epigram. Photo by Zinon Papakonstantinou.

Furthermore, the commemorative inscriptions of deceased women allow us to illustrate, in conjunction with the symbols of femininity portrayed in a stele or other monument, how widely attested female character traits were perceived and represented. Hence in a grave stele from Imperial Apameia (Figure 6.2) Italia was honored for her prudence (σωφροσύνη) and love of her husband (φιλανδρία).⁹⁴ In this case a large wreath visually dominates the stele; it encloses a mirror and it is surrounded by a comb, a wool basket, spindle and distaff. In terms of the dominant worldview, women's *sophrosyne* was understood as a primarily domestic, behavioral attribute, akin to discretion, self-control and temperance. Hence in the



Figure 6.2 IK Apameia (Bithynien) und Pylai 13; drawing from M. Philippe Le Bas, E. Landron and S. Reinach, *Voyage archéologique en Grèce et en Asie Mineure*, Paris 1888, Table 133, 1.

preceding example Italia was “crowned” for these qualities with a virtual wreath. It is worth noting that in domestic contexts these female character attributes are presented in epigraphic commemoration as innate – a wife, daughter or sister was either in possession of them by birth or not. But when elite women assumed public offices and performed benefactions often the relevant character qualities that prompted them to do so are partly attributed to the positive influence of a male *kyrios*. In Imperial Patara, for instance, Claudia Anassa and her husband, Eudemos, were prominent public figures, with a long record of public service and benefactions.⁹⁵ This record earned the couple numerous accolades from their native

city. On a most recent count, there were at least 15 monuments honoring Anassa and Eudemos, individually or jointly, in the civicscape of Patara.⁹⁶ In honorary monuments set up as a lifetime tribute Anassa is described as a lover/patron of her city and as a woman of outstanding prudence and virtue.⁹⁷ The inscriptions also record the highlights of Anassa's benefactions and emphatically point out, and in a manner that suggests a benign influence, that she assimilated/adopted her husband's magnanimity and love towards the city.⁹⁸

This sample of funerary and honorary monuments provides fascinating insights into the representational and symbolic language – both iconographic and rhetorical – employed by and for women. The prominence of the wreath, a universally recognized symbol of victory and achievement in athletics and public life, is indicative of the extent that elite women, represented for the most part as integral members of distinguished families, had been assimilated to the dominant discourse of benefaction and social dominance. The use of surplus-value terminology ("first and only" etc.) to distinguish the achievements of women, also points to the same conclusion. It is crucial to emphasize the family connection that accounts to a large extent for the increasing presence of women – and children – of elite backgrounds in public life as holders of offices and performers of benefactions. In the Greek cities of the Hellenistic and Imperial periods the intra-elite battle for ideological and representational dominance was conducted on both the individual and the familial plane, and in the latter case it was crucial that no one was left out. In that context elite women were encouraged to partake in public service and, at the same time, celebrate their more "feminine" and domestic virtues through visual and rhetorical signifiers that originally emerged, and became popularized, in the world of male Greek athletics. Elite women were also involved, in their capacity as benefactors, in a fascinating transformation of Greek performance culture during the Imperial period, a theme that will be the focus of my analysis in the final section of this chapter.

3 A Greco-Roman agonistic culture

In the early third century CE Flavianus Diogenes and Licinnia Flavilla from the city of Oinoanda set up an impressive mausoleum that was intended to be the resting place for members of the distinguished Licinniani family. Representation is the measure of power, a principle that Diogenes and Flavilla understood well. The mausoleum was meant to be an ideological and social statement, an outstanding monument that stood out from other elite commemorative and honorary monuments in Oinoanda. Their intention was largely achieved through the six-column genealogy of the Licinniani inscribed on the outer walls of the building. Monument and language joined forces to construct a potent weapon in the discursive conflict, conducted at the level of representation and the construction of meaning, by elite families of Oinoanda.⁹⁹

Not surprisingly the Licinniani genealogy reaffirmed the preponderance of long family pedigree, office holding, public achievements and benefaction, i.e. the parameters that largely determined the terms of competition between elite families as well as how the families in question were evaluated by their fellow-citizens and Roman authorities. Over several generations the Licinniani held offices and military leadership positions in the city of Oinoanda, in the Lykian league as well as in the provincial Roman administration. Moreover, members of the family served in priesthoods and as *oikestai*. The genealogy also refers to the victories in sacred games of Flavillianus, an athlete we have already encountered in Chapter 5, as well as the sponsorship of Roman sports by Licinius Longus who during the year of his priesthood of the *Sebastoi theoi* he subsidized gladiatorial fights and beast hunts.¹⁰⁰ The elaboration afforded to the sponsoring of Roman spectacles by Longus is exceptional for the Licinniani genealogy which usually adumbrates in the most terse of terms, i.e. merely by title, the offices held and services rendered by members of the family.

Indeed, there is other evidence to suggest that by the late Imperial period Roman sports had spread in many parts of the Greek-speaking East.¹⁰¹ The process of adoption and adaptation of Roman spectacles in the East was complex, but in its broad outlines it involved a partial decontextualization of Roman sport and its subsequent investiture with local meanings, i.e. its re-contextualization in the Greek world.¹⁰² The final outcome was the emergence of an intercultural space of interaction of Greek and Roman athletic traditions within which a cultural translation of Roman-style spectacles as performed in the Greek-speaking East was forged. Recent work by Christian Mann and Michael Carter demonstrated how gladiators and other performers of Roman sports in the East adopted a discourse of commemoration that closely paralleled the eulogistic narratives common in victory or career-celebrating inscriptions for athletes active in Greek sport.¹⁰³ Gladiators and *venatores*, in other words, wished to be remembered in terms of the heroic and muscular masculinity that had very much defined the image of high achievers in Greek sport since the Archaic period. Moreover, benefactors increasingly turned their attention to the sponsorship of Roman-style spectacles. An early precedent in the Greek-speaking East were the *munera* sponsored by the Seleucid king Antiochos IV Epiphanes, who reigned from 175 to 164 BCE.¹⁰⁴ In the Imperial period civic elites of Greek cities who wished to sponsor both Greek and Roman sports had no less than Augustus himself to emulate: he sponsored spectacular gladiatorial games and Greek athletic contests in Rome, although in his case the emphasis (both rhetorically and in quantitative terms) was on the arena spectacles.¹⁰⁵

An additional factor to be considered in connection with the organization and sponsorship of *munera* in the Greek-speaking East is that such Roman-style spectacles were traditionally an integral part of the imperial cult, so it was a relatively late addition to the agonistic and performative life of Greek cities.¹⁰⁶ Such spectacles certainly remained a rarity – to the extent that they were held at all – in the Hellenistic and early Imperial period in the East. Livy, our source

for the *munera* presented by Antiochos IV, portrays them as a novelty for the Seleucid kingdom. It was only during the middle and advanced Imperial times that *munera* and *venationes* really took root in Greek cities and their popularity vied, though did not surpass, traditional Greek athletics. The growing popularity of these Roman spectacles is evidenced, among others, by the fact that their commemoration took pride of place in the representational strategies of civic elites who sponsored such spectacles usually in their capacity as priests of the imperial cult.¹⁰⁷ Again in Oinoanda, an honorary inscription for a civic benefactor emphasized his monetary donations and distributions as well as his sponsorship of *munera* and *venationes* for two days.¹⁰⁸ Moreover, a fragmentary honorary decree for an imperial cult priest from Mylasa allows a rare glimpse of the assiduousness applied in the organization of such a spectacle, no doubt a reflection of its popularity and the symbolic importance attached to it.¹⁰⁹ The same decree also intimates something of the spectacle's reception by the local audience. The decree refers to the parade of gladiators in the local venue, the presentation of fighters armed with a variety of weapons (supplied by the *editor*) and skilled in different techniques, as well as to the spectators' approbation of the quality of the spectacle, especially their cheering (*epivoesin* l.6) as well as their empathy, the latter possibly towards the fallen fighters. The inscription also refers to the distribution of money and roses (l. 16) by the *editor* to the spectators.¹¹⁰

In a similar fashion, an honorary inscription for an *editor* in Apollonia provides a detailed account of logistical aspects of gladiatorial *munera* and *venationes* that lasted four days and were integrated into his personal ledger of acts of civic munificence.¹¹¹ On this occasion all gladiatorial fights were conducted with sharp weapons (ll. 4–6). As for the beasts, they were trained and during the hunt lances were used “in a most illustrious manner” (ll. 11–13), ostensibly referring to the skill of the hunters. Just as gladiators in the Greek-speaking parts presented themselves in a commemorative discourse that closely paralleled mainstream Greek sport practices, so did the editors – male and female – of *munera* and *venationes* adopted the format of the laudatory narrative of benefactors of Greek agonistic festivals. In the conventions of munificence commemoration, the detailed enumeration of particulars pertinent on animal training or the weaponry used during spectacles corresponded to the minute cataloguing of popular facets of Greek games, e.g. the exact monetary amounts donated to different civic groups, or the precise schedule and manner of provision of anointing oil. In both Greek and Roman sport it was this attention to detail, celebrated in the epigraphic record through references to superlative features of the spectacle, that elevated the appeal of the benefaction. For instance, not all gladiatorial fights were conducted with sharp weapons, a metonymic reference to frequent fatalities. Hence, in the example discussed above, four days of such bloody performances must have appeared particularly attractive to the residents of the small city of Apollonia. Furthermore, in major urban centers of the Greek-speaking East such spectacles could last longer. In one case a benefactor from Ankyra sponsored gladiatorial *munera* and *venationes* for 51 days, although this

number probably refers cumulatively to his sponsorship of such events during his entire public career.¹¹² Also in Ankyra, we hear of 30 and on another occasion 50 pairs of gladiators.¹¹³ Moreover, *venationes* are also frequently mentioned among the services performed by the priests of Augustus in Ankyra.¹¹⁴ The contrast between the magnitude of *munera* and *venationes* in regional administrative centers (Ankyra) vis-à-vis smaller cities (Apollonia, Oinoanda) emerges clearly from the extant epigraphic record in Asia Minor but also from other parts of the Roman East (cf. the cases of Veroia and Thessaloniki discussed below).

As imperial dominance in the Greek-speaking East matured after the end of the first century CE we encounter many cases of Greek or Hellenized civic elites who sponsored *both* Greek-style *agones* and Roman spectacles – in one case from Sagalassos the sponsor of Roman arena spectacles was, in fact, a retired athlete.¹¹⁵ In the Imperial East the representation of all facets of Greek sport, including monuments for athletes and sponsors (*agonothetai* and *gymnasiarchs*) is, in quantitative terms, still overwhelmingly higher than all representations of Roman style sport – e.g. grave monuments for gladiators or honorary inscriptions for *editores* – combined. Still, the eagerness of many benefactors to add to their portfolio of Greek agonistic munificence by sponsoring Roman spectacles and then proudly commemorate them suggests that the production of *munera* and *venationes* was for many local notables a meaningful stage towards cultural Romanization. Furthermore, and this is quite significant for our understanding of the intersection between Greek and Roman sport, the trend to sponsor and commemorate both *agones* and *munera/venationes* suggests that from the perspective of the class of benefactors the two sets of practices had achieved, at the community level, more or less equal standing in their distinction-generating symbolism.

Many of the Augustus priests from Ankyra explicitly advertised their involvement in the organization of Greek-style *agones* and the provision of copious amounts of anointing oil for extended periods of time, in addition to Roman-style spectacles.¹¹⁶ An inscription from Sebastopolis in the Pontus suggests the geographical range of these practices as well as the strategies of implementation and representation of the Greco-Roman spectacle culture. The inscription, which dates to the mid-second century CE, honors M. Antonius Rufus, a local dignitary and multi-benefactor.¹¹⁷ During Hadrian's lifetime Rufus was appointed as high priest for life, and it was in this capacity that he sponsored *munera* and *venationes* on numerous occasions (ll. 15–16). Rufus also served in several other offices in the city or region, e.g. Pontarch of the local league, *agoranomos* in Sebastopolis as well as sponsor of infrastructure projects and public venues. Among the latter, Rufus was recorded as the first to “open the *gymnasion*.” This turn of phrase suggests a major act of sponsorship, perhaps involving the refurbishment and relaunch of the local *gymnasion* venue and/or its increased accessibility during special occasions, including agonistic festivals.

Another case study that exemplifies these trends concerns Claudius Rufius Menon and Baebia Magna, a husband and wife pair of benefactors from Roman

Thessaloniki. In the years 252–260 CE three inscriptions were erected in the *agora* of their city with the objective of advertising future *munera* and *venationes* sponsored by the pair on three different occasions.¹¹⁸ As these documents inform us, Rufrius Menon held various religious, civic and league positions, including *agonothetes* for life for the Alexandria games of the *koinon* of Macedonians, as well as *agonothetes* for the Caesareia Pythia.¹¹⁹ Regarding the Roman spectacles sponsored by the pair two of the inscriptions, which were accompanied by visual representations of such performances, survive in a state to reveal details of the events. In the year 252 CE the pair sponsored three days of gladiatorial fights and beast hunts in Veroia, the capital of the Macedonian *koinon*.¹²⁰ The performances, which in addition to Thessaloniki were probably advertised in other cities in the area as well, included 18 pairs of gladiators as well as various local animals, 18 of each kind.¹²¹ The pair sponsored Roman spectacles in Thessaloniki as well, in 259 CE and then again in 260 CE.¹²² While the inscription advertising the spectacles of 259 CE is fragmentary, the one germane to the *munera/venationes* of 260 CE preserves some details on the scale of the performances. Not having the cachet of Veroia, the spectacles offered in Thessaloniki were of a reduced scale. They lasted only one day, comprising two pairs of gladiators, six imported animals (leopards, hyenas and perhaps a lion) as well as four of each from the category of local animals. It is also worth contrasting the format of advertising and representing of Roman sports encountered in this dossier, especially in connection with the spectacles produced in Thessaloniki, with contemporary patterns of epigraphic representation of Greek-style agonistic festivals. In the latter everyone more or less knew the basic framework of an agonistic festival and it was up to the benefactors, normally the *agonothetai*, to overindulge with prizes for athletes, musical/theatrical performances as well as oil provisions and distributions for spectators. While such types of benefaction in Greek games were at times explicitly mentioned in commemorative inscriptions that contained the highlights of a benefactor's career, hence long after their performance, in principle it was not necessary to announce in advance of Greek agonistic festivals the particulars of the upcoming benefaction in excruciating detail. The opposite was, however, the norm for Roman-style spectacles. The attention to detail, especially regarding the *munera* and *venationes* organized in Thessaloniki, was symptomatic of the novelty and exoticism that such spectacles still represented for the inhabitants of a city of that size and clout.

The trend to commemorate in the same breath the role of elites as *agonothetai* and *editores* is more common in the case of monuments commemorating, often posthumously, their entire public careers. In one such instance from Magnesia on the Meander Tiberius Claudius Zopas dedicated a statue of his father (name unknown).¹²³ The honoree is showered with all the usual, for members of his class, tokens of distinction, i.e. “son of the city,” “patriot,” “of noble birth.” His record of offices, services and benefactions are in keeping with the typical public career trajectory of a member of the civic elite. In the order mentioned in the inscription, he provided oil during the *proastios panegyris* for more days than what was customary, he undertook the

gymnasiarchia – and performed it brilliantly – for a year, served as *agonothetes* of the Great Claudia festival, sponsored gladiatorial fights to the death for three days, acted as secretary of the *boule*, and frequently spent his own money for repair and refurbishment projects in the city. Similarly in Selge, Magnianus Perikles was *agonothetes* for life as well as participant in religious delegations (*theoriai*), provider of distributions, as well as sponsor of gladiatorial games and beast hunts.¹²⁴ These and numerous other examples corroborate the culturally symbiotic relationship, at least on the representational level, of iconic Greek and Roman forms of sport and spectacle.¹²⁵ Elite women in Greek cities were also involved in the organization of *munera* and *venationes*.¹²⁶ Also notable is that Roman officials in the Greek-speaking East were willing to engage in benefactions towards Greek agonistic venues and practices as token gestures of cultural goodwill. The freedman Chresimus who served as *procurator a marboribus* under the emperors Domitian and Nerva paid for the embellishment of the *cella caldaria* of the *gymnasion* in Tralleis with colored marble.¹²⁷

Besides overlapping forms of representation for benefactors and performers, in the Greek-speaking East the converging trajectory of Roman and Greek-style games was also manifested in the sharing of performance venues. Often venues that were readily available, some centuries old, were adapted to accommodate the acquired taste of Greek audiences for *munera* and *venationes*. These venues were inextricably associated in public mentality with iconic Greek cultural practices, most notably theatrical performances and athletic *agones*. According to Philostratus, Apollonius of Tyana famously lamented the enthusiasm of Athenians who thronged to the theater of Dionysus to watch gladiatorial fights among questionable characters: “adulterers and fornicators and burglars and cut-purses and kidnappers and such-like rabble.”¹²⁸ However, archaeological evidence suggests that this was not a temporary fad. Athenians enjoyed *munera* in the theater of Dionysus from c. 70 CE and the popularity of these spectacles continued in Athens until the third century CE.¹²⁹ Other Greek cities also converted or adjusted theaters to host gladiatorial combats, but custom-built amphitheaters also existed in the Roman East.¹³⁰ Moreover, in Asia Minor stadia were commonly used for the purpose of hosting Roman-style spectacles. In Aphrodisias, a city with a vibrant culture of Greek sport during the Imperial period, the stadium was built in late first-century CE to be multifunctional from the outset, i.e. to host both Greek and Roman-style contests.¹³¹ Moreover, the Aphrodisias stadium was larger than the typical stadium destined only for Greek *agones*, no doubt to accommodate the needs of space required by gladiators and *venatores*. Similar arrangements are attested in other cities of the Imperial East. The stadia at Laodikeia at Lykos and Nikopolis (for the latter see Figure 6.3) were also built amphitheatrically, i.e. surrounded by spectator stands, and were therefore architectural cross-breeds of the Greek stadium and the Roman arena.¹³² In other cases, already existing stadia adjusted to accommodate Roman-style spectacles, e.g. in Perge the northern end of the race track of the stadium was enclosed for that purpose (Figure 6.4).



Figure 6.3 Stadium in Nikopolis, built c. 30 BCE. Photo by Zinon Papakonstantinou.



Figure 6.4 Stadium of Perge viewed from north. Part of the race track was enclosed to host Roman-style spectacles. Photo by Zinon Papakonstantinou.

The fact that gladiatorial contests and beast hunts were held in venues that were traditionally associated with Greek-style *agones* is also abundantly documented in the epigraphic record, especially gravestones for performers in Roman spectacles. Both *gladiators* and *venatores* highlight the extent of their achievements in the stadium. In one example from Larissa Phoibos, a gladiator from Kyzikos, records that he fought valiantly in stadia in Asia, Thrace and Macedonia before meeting his fate in Larissa.¹³³ In this and other cases the reference to stadia should be taken literally to mean the venues regularly hosting Greek athletics, which occasionally doubled as arenas for Roman-style spectacles.

4 Conclusion

In the preceding discussion I attempted to unravel facets of gender performance and the hybridization of spectacle culture through Greek sport during the Imperial period. Agonistic festivals encoded in moments of individual or communal performance, gaiety and celebration the power relations and identities present in Greek communities. But at the same time, the liminal nature of some of the activities integrated in agonistic festivals brought to the surface possibilities of antagonism and subversion. The epigraphic record from the city of Stratonikeia exemplifies most of these trends and dissonances characteristic of Greek festivals of the Imperial period. The foundational narrative and strategy of recognition of the status of the Stratonikeia festivals suggests that the civic elites of the city conformed to well-established standards of establishing and promoting civic festivals of interstate appeal. But thanks to the liberality of priests, who acted as *agonothetai* and benefactors, the Stratonikeian festivals increasingly integrated in their program leisure practices (processions, banquets, food and oil grants) and became partially accessible to subaltern groups (women, slaves, other persons of non-citizen status), thus introducing an element of liminality and subjectivity in these flagship civic events. Stratonikeian women were often in the epicenter of these activities as benefactors or participants in liminal leisure practices. Regarding benefaction, as the burden of financing sport-related activities shifted gradually during the Imperial period towards private sponsoring, women often joined their rich husbands and other family members in partaking, in memorable numbers, in civic largess. Regarding participation, the Stratonikeia epigraphic record makes clear that many benefactions occurring in the context of agonistic festivals were customized to the needs and expectations of local women who, we might reasonably assume, took advantage of these temporary opportunities to share in some aspects of the local *gymnasion*/agonistic culture.

Women's involvement in agonistic festivals and, to a limited extent, athletic training and competition was complemented by the co-optation and reification of prominent agonistic symbols to represent the daily life and values of women. This is particularly apparent in the case of grave stelai for women which often employ

discursive neologisms, especially surplus-value terms, developed and popularized in Greek athletics. Visually striking reminders from the world of athletics, e.g. the victor's wreath, were also widely used to honor a particular civic service or achievement but also to signify a woman's virtuous life, as well as her affection and loyalty to her family and city. The co-optation of Greek agonistic victory discourse is also detected in the language employed in the commemoration of gladiators and *venatores* active in the Greek-speaking East under Roman rule. Numerous other facets of the expansion of Roman sports in this part of the Roman world strongly indicate the emergence of a hybrid Greco-Roman spectacle culture. More specifically, *munera* and *venationes* elicited an exotic appeal, a factor that made such spectacles even more "marketable" benefactions in Roman Greece and Asia Minor. Hence civic benefactors, individually or collectively as kin groups, vied with each other for the provision of frequent and extravagant Roman spectacles, in the same fashion as they sponsored Greek-style *agones* and *gymnasion*-related activities. To be sure, in the Roman East private funding towards the sponsoring of Greek sport outweighed the amounts spent on *munera* and *venationes*. But it is noteworthy that in some instances civic elites sponsored both Greek and Roman style spectacles, and commemorated the latter in an idiom appropriated by the long tradition of commemoration of benefactions in Greek sport. In many cases Greek sport venues, especially stadia, were also architecturally adjusted to accommodate the needs of the rising demand by inhabitants of the eastern provinces of the Roman empire for both Greek and Roman spectacles.

Notes

- 1 Besnier, Brownell and Carter 2018, 1.
- 2 Hin 2007; Laes and Strubbe 2014, 104–120.
- 3 Lazaridou 2015, 14–17.
- 4 IG VII.1777.
- 5 I.Kaunos 139, IIIc, 4–5, second century CE. For gymnasiarchs πάσης ηλικίας και τύχης see also IK Stratonikeia nos. 281, 295b, 309, 705.
- 6 OGIS 2.479, first or second century CE.
- 7 For banquets in *gymnasia* see Mango 2007. For oil provision see Kennell 2001 and Fröhlich 2009. For special-occasion activities in *gymnasia* during the Imperial period see also section 1b of the current chapter.
- 8 As pointed out in Chapter 3, in the *gymnasion* law from Veroia, Hatzopoulos and Gauthier 1993, B, 26–28, slaves and freedmen are expressly forbidden from training in the *gymnasion*. For a discussion of other evidence regarding the accessibility to the *gymnasion* by subaltern groups see Kobes 2007.
- 9 For other sources related to women and the *gymnasion* during the Hellenistic and Imperial periods see Mantas 1995; Tsouvala 2015.
- 10 For the festivals of Stratonikeia, including those of Zeus and Hekate, see Debord 2007. For the technical terminology and other aspects of benefaction in Stratonikeia see Aubriet 2013. For a prosopography of priests of Zeus and Hekate see Laumonier 1937, 1938a, 1938b and 1958. For the priests and festivals of Stratonikeia and their role in the formation of civic identity see Williamson 2012 and 2013.

- 11 IK *Stratonikeia* 1101, early third century CE. According to this inscription the procession with choral singing had lapsed in the past and was revived by Sosandros, a member of one of the city's leading families who had also served as priest of Zeus Panamaros (see IK *Stratonikeia* 266).
- 12 See e.g. IK *Stratonikeia* 16, c. 200 CE, for an individual who served as priest of Zeus Panamaros five times and of Hekate once, as well as in numerous other priesthoods; IK *Stratonikeia* 1028, for an individual who served as priest of Zeus Panamaros once and of Hekate thrice, as well as in other priesthoods.
- 13 IK *Stratonikeia* 507 and 508.
- 14 That funding and social pedigree were the most important considerations in awarding priesthoods and other civic positions is indicated by the case of Leon Hierokleous (IK *Stratonikeia* 667) who served as high priest of the imperial cult at the age of ten, as gymnasiarch at the age of 11 as well as priest of Zeus Panamaros at the age of 16.
- 15 *Iscr. di Cos* EV 203, 9–11 and 15–16, Augustan period, for an athlete from Kos who won the pentathlon in the *paides isthmikoi* age-group and the pentathlon in the *ageneioi* in two different iterations of the Hekatesia; IK *Stratonikeia* 547 (after the re-organization of 81 BCE) for Euboulos from Stratonikeia, victor at the *pankration* for boys as well as the *pankration* and wrestling for men at the Hekatesia Romaia.
- 16 IK *Stratonikeia* 1005, Imperial period, refers to a penteteric *agon* but the context is not clear.
- 17 For a priest with athletic background see IK *Stratonikeia* 268, 3 and 685, 2–3 honoring Epainetos Pamphilos who was *paradoxos* victor at the Halieia games in Rhodes as well as victor in many other contests, including in sacred games (*hieronikes pleistonikes*).
- 18 For other instances of gladiatorial shows and beast hunts in Stratonikeia see IK *Stratonikeia* 303, 5; IK *Stratonikeia* 701, 4–5 for *venationes* produced by high priests of Hekate; and IK *Stratonikeia* 199, 4, discussed below. Cf. also the funerary memorial for the gladiators hired by the high priest Uliades, IK *Stratonikeia* 1015 and the gravestone for a single gladiator, IK *Stratonikeia* 1016.
- 19 IK *Stratonikeia* 1025, 1–7. For Aeneas see Laumonier 1937, 262, no. 71.
- 20 IK *Stratonikeia* 1025, 21–23. Cf. IK *Stratonikeia* 303 for a different pair of priests of Zeus Panamaros which did not use the sum (*ιερωσυνών*) granted to them for the performance of sacrifices and other rituals during the festival, but paid for these expenses themselves. The funds provided by the city were diverted instead to the priests' *gymnasiarchia*, distributions and banquets that entertained the guests during the festival.
- 21 IK *Stratonikeia* 1025, 11–13.
- 22 IK *Stratonikeia* 210, 9.
- 23 IK *Stratonikeia* 254, 9–10.
- 24 IK *Stratonikeia* 530, 8–10. For a similar case of sponsoring ἀκροάματα throughout the year see IK *Stratonikeia* 668, 5–6.
- 25 IK *Stratonikeia* 199, 3–5. For the provision of spectacles see also IK *Stratonikeia* 197, 14–15 for Tib. Flavius Theophanes, a priest of Zeus who hired performers for the Panamareia festival – for this individual see Laumonier 1937, 259 no. 66; IK *Stratonikeia* 266, 28–30, for thymelic and athletic competitions in the Panamareia; IK *Stratonikeia* 295 (a) and (b), 10–12, for thymelic and athletic contests in the Panamareia (restored); IK *Stratonikeia* 672, 10–11, for ἀκροάματα in the Heraia; and IK *Stratonikeia* 684, 9 and 685, 10 for actors (θεατρικούς) performing at the festival of Hekate.

- 26 See e.g. IK *Stratonikeia* 185; 217; 218; 244, 19–22; 245, 4–5. Cf. IK *Stratonikeia* 668, 3–4; 678, 7–8; 685, 7–8 for priests/gymnasiarchs of the festival days for Hekate. The *gymnasiarchiai* for the duration of a festival were in principle separate from the *gymnasiarchiai* for an entire or part of a year undertaken by wealthy Stratonikeians, e.g. IK *Stratonikeia* 175; 1024, 5; 1028, 8, 13–14 and 16.
- 27 IK *Stratonikeia* 202, 24–27; 218, 4–5; 316, 5–7.
- 28 IK *Stratonikeia* 309, 17–18.
- 29 IK *Stratonikeia* 310, 16–17.
- 30 Hera, IK *Stratonikeia* 224, 8; Hekate, 22 days, IK *Stratonikeia* 311, 19–20; 32 days, IK *Stratonikeia* 1446, 8.
- 31 IK *Stratonikeia* 701, 8–10. For similar arrangements cf. IK *Stratonikeia* 704, 7–9; 705, 5–12; 735, 3–4.
- 32 IK *Stratonikeia* 224, 7–9. Cf. IK *Stratonikeia* 281, 12–13 for a similar arrangement during the Panamareia.
- 33 For other instances of provision of oil during the evening hours see IK *Stratonikeia* 202, 27–29; 203, 13–14; 205, 15–16; 244, 22–23; 245, 5–6; 246, 6–8; 247, 15–18; 254, 10–11; 281, 8–13; 295(b), 8; 311, 23–25; 312, 9; 324, 25–26.
- 34 IK *Stratonikeia* 247, 15–19. Cf. also IK *Stratonikeia*, 244, 20–23; 245, 4–6; 246, 5–10; 247, 15–20.
- 35 Varinlioglu 1988, no. 25.
- 36 Perfumes: IK *Stratonikeia* 202, 31–32; 242, 19–20; 324, 28. Cf. IK *Stratonikeia* 281, 11 and 672, 2 for oil scented with grape-bloom. Unguents: IK *Stratonikeia* 203, 14–15; 205, 16–17; 295 (a), 7–8.
- 37 IK *Stratonikeia* 310, 12–31. See also IK *Stratonikeia* 678, 8 for Aristes Minnionos, a priest of Hekate, who also served as gymnasiarch for the duration of the festival while the price of oil was 40 denarii per liquid unit. In another case, a benefactor of the early Imperial period donated 1,000 *drachmai* for the “perpetual” supply of oil in one of the city’s *gymnasias*, IK *Stratonikeia* 1032 + 1046 + IK *Stratonikeia* vol II2 p. 33, 14–20. Cf. IK *Iasos* 248, second century CE, for a foundation of 5,000 denarii, the interest of which was to provide for oil in the *gymnasion* for the *neoi* during the sixth month. For attempts during the Imperial period by gymnasiarchs and other benefactors to deal with high prices of oil see Kennell 2001, 123–126.
- 38 For *πάση ηλικίᾳ καὶ τύχῃ* see also IK *Stratonikeia* 192, 7; 199, 2; 205, 15; 218, 20–21; 222, 6–7; 224, 7; 242, 17; 244, 23; 247, 18–19; 248, 7; 254, 10–11; 256, 7–8; 266, 13; 268, 7; 281, 12; 295b, 7; 309, 8–21; 310, 41–42; 311, 28–29; 324, 21–24; 527, 8; 663, 21–22; 684, 8; 685, 9; 705, 12; 1032 + 1046 + IK *Stratonikeia* II2 p. 33, 8–9; 1325, 14–15.
- 39 Visiting foreigners and Romans: IK *Stratonikeia* 172, 7–8; 203, 18; 205, 31; 244, 24; 245, 6; 247, 19; 248, 8; 254, 11–15; 270, 8–11; 309, 13 and 21; 310, 20; 311, 14 and 29–30; 312, 11; 347, 4–8; 353, 1; 527, 7; 663, 4; 678, 6; 684, 6; 685, 5; 705, 5–6; 1034, 11; 1325A, 12–13; 1428, 7. Women: IK *Stratonikeia* 172, 9–10; 192, 8–10; 202, 30–38; 205, 17–19 and 32–34; 244, 24–25; 245, 6; 246, 8–10; 248, 8–11; 254, 7 and 15; 256, 8–10; 258, 7; 309, 10–11; 310, 41; 311, 21–22; 312, 8; 324, 21–28; 352, 2–3; 663, 7; 672, 5–6; 698, 7; 699, 4; 706, 3–5 and 11–13; 1325A, 15. *Πάρουκοι*: IK *Stratonikeia* 172, 8; 663, 7; 1428, 7. Slaves: IK *Stratonikeia* 15, 10–11; 172, 8; 202, 30–38; 203, 18; 205, 31; 210, 8; 246, 8–10; 254, 15; 255, 15–16; 256, 8–10; 663, 7.
- 40 IK *Stratonikeia* 202, 30–38.
- 41 IK *Stratonikeia* 205, 17–19; 311, 21–22; 312, 8; 324, 21–28.
- 42 IK *Stratonikeia* 242, 18–29.
- 43 IK *Stratonikeia* 172, 9–10.
- 44 IK *Stratonikeia* 344, 1–3.

- 45 IK *Stratonikeia* 170, 7–8; 1025, 17–20. Cf. IG XII.7.515, 59–60 and 69–70, Amor-gos – Aigiale, late second century BCE, for public feasts conducted in the *gymnasion* in which foreigners, Romans and women were allowed to participate.
- 46 IK *Stratonikeia* 181, 14–17.
- 47 For the concept of free spaces see Evans and Boyte 1992.
- 48 Chaniotis 2013, 43.
- 49 For the notion of paramount realities see Goffman 1974.
- 50 For localized trust and the importance of community in the pre-modern world see Giddens 1990, 100–111.
- 51 Adorno and Horkheimer 2002, 83.
- 52 For the notion of “reversible time” see Lévi-Strauss 1955.
- 53 See Graf 2015, 11–60 for a recent discussion of Greek festivals during the Imperial era that acknowledges elements of discursive conflict and negotiation.
- 54 Bakhtin 1984.
- 55 Bakhtin 1984, 255.
- 56 Geertz 2017; Myerhoff 1992.
- 57 A process that Giddens 1984, 16 calls “dialectic of control.”
- 58 Turner 1988, 25. See also Turner 1982, 43, which elaborates the distinction between liminal and liminoid situations, which he views as obligatory and optional respectively.
- 59 Stebbins 1992; Rojek 2000.
- 60 Rojek 2000, 148.
- 61 Goffman 1967.
- 62 IG V.1.1208, 40–41.
- 63 Fontenrose 1988, 75–76.
- 64 *I.Didyma* 254, 8–9, 130/8 CE; *I.Didyma* 382, 1–2, fragmentary reference to girls and women, probably in connection with a feast and/or distributions in the Anoigmoi. Cf. IG XII.2.68, Lesbos, Imperial period, for banquets and monetary distributions to girls and women in the context of a festival.
- 65 *I.Didyma* 314, 11–16 and *I.Didyma* 312, 20–21, both second quarter of second century CE. Cf. also *I.Didyma* 375, 1–6, c. 230 CE, probably regarding the Magala Didymeia, for distributions to girls and women by a female benefactor.
- 66 e.g. IK *Sestos* 1, 73–74 and 84–85; IK *Mylasa* 413; IK *Priene* 68, 76–91; IK *Priene* 69, 76–78; IK *Priene* 41, 7–9.
- 67 See references in Chapter 4, notes 126–129.
- 68 See also Chapter 3.1.
- 69 IK *Knidos* I.71. For *intra muros* funerals as an honor see Grandinetti 2007/2008; Papakonstantinou 2018, 72–75.
- 70 *I.Kaunos* 30, 1–4, c. second century CE.
- 71 IK *Knidos* I.71, 7 *arête* and *doxa*; *I.Kaunos* 30, 5ff.
- 72 Turner 1988, 68.
- 73 Rowe and Schelling 1991, 231. On cultural hybridity see also Said 1993; Bhabha 1994; Burke 2009; Werbner and Modood 2015.
- 74 *I.Miletus* I.7.265, late second/third centuries CE.
- 75 The extent to which such public office appointments undertaken by women and children were real or nominal is debatable, but again the record suggests that some women – e.g. Phaenia Aromation – were actively engaged in their office-holding and benefactions. For a detailed discussion of other epigraphically attested examples of women office holders in Hellenistic and Roman Asia Minor see van Bremen 1996, with the cautionary comments by Pomeroy 1998 on the interpretative outlook of van Bremen’s study.
- 76 SEG 15.532.

- 77 IK *Selge* 15, first half of third century CE.
- 78 TAM V.1.688, 12–13, Ioulia Gordos, Imperial period, model for household management; TAM II.767, 24–25, Arneai, Imperial period, character and conduct as model for all women; SEG 37.1099bis, Amorion, second/third centuries CE, surpassed all women in modesty and other character traits; IK *Erythrai und Klazomenai* 302, c. third century CE, “the best of women” “ἀριστεύουσα γυναικῶν.”
- 79 IK *Iasos* 97.
- 80 SEG 28.953, 39–47, first century CE.
- 81 I.*Magnesia* 158, 6.
- 82 Priene: IK *Priene* 305; Assos: IK *Assos* 16, Augustan period.
- 83 IK *Erythrai und Klazomenai* 85, Hellenistic.
- 84 I.*Didyma* 326 and 327.
- 85 IG XII.8, 389, Imperial period. For other examples see Robert and Robert 1954 no. 65, Herakleia Salbake, Imperial; I.*Didyma* 345, 25, mid/late Hellenistic; IK *Perge* 118, 120 and 121, second century CE.
- 86 I.*Didyma* 321. Cf. the athlete and performer Hedeia, daughter of Hermesianax, FD III 1.534, 2.3, 10
- 87 For men, the practice of epigraphically portraying wreaths on honorary inscriptions for benefactors or office holders begins in earnest during the Hellenistic period. See e.g. IK *Assos* 9, second/first centuries BCE; I.*Kaunos* nos. 6, 17–20 and 22, Hellenistic; *Clara Rhodos* 2 (1932), no. 4, second century BCE; IK *Smyrna* 2, Hellenistic.
- 88 See IK *Smyrna* 91, second century BCE, honoring Axiothea and Menekles. In this case the wreaths are portrayed in boxes, i.e. containers used for the storage/preservation of actual honorary wreaths.
- 89 For *Smyrna*, in addition to the examples discussed here, see also IK *Smyrna* 1–189 for funerary stelai for women or men with wreaths carved in relief.
- 90 IK *Smyrna* 891, late Hellenistic or early Imperial.
- 91 IK *Hadrianoi und Hadrianeia* 181, pl. 28.
- 92 IK *Prusa ad Olympum* 147, second century CE.
- 93 Wreath and domestic accouterments: IK *Prusa ad Olympum* 31, wreath, spindle and distaff, second century CE; IK *Kyzikos* 214, wreath, mirror, comb, spindle and distaff, third century CE. Wreath: IK *Kyzikos* 525, wife and husband depicted; IK *Smyrna* 1, Hellenistic; IK *Smyrna* 888, wreath by the *demos*, second/first centuries BCE; IK *Smyrna* 890, second century BCE; IK *Erythrai und Klazomenai* 428, two wreaths by the local *demos*, Hellenistic or early Imperial; IK *Prusa ad Olympum* nos. 54–56, funerary stelai for women, second/third centuries CE. Honorary inscriptions for pairs of husbands and wives were also decorated with wreaths, e.g. IK *Keramos* nos. 36, 40 and 41.
- 94 IK *Apameia (Bithynien) und Pylai* 13.
- 95 Engelmann 2012, nos. 3 and 4.
- 96 Lepke, Schuler, and Zimmermann 2015, 374–375.
- 97 Engelmann 2012, no. 4, 3 φιλοπατρίδα.
- 98 Engelmann 2012, no. 3, 13–14; no. 4, 3–4 and 11–13. Lepke, Schuler, and Zimmermann 2015, no. 9, col. II, 12–14.
- 99 IGR 3.500. For the monument see Hall, Milner and Coulton 1996.
- 100 Flavillianus, IGR 3.500, IV.12–V.3; Longus, IGR 3.500.III, 36–38.
- 101 For Roman sports in the Greek East under Roman rule see also Golden 2008, 79–89.
- 102 With reference to modern processes of cultural adaptation in the meanings attached to sport MacAloon (1995 and 1996) has conceived sport as an “empty form” that is consistently reinvested with indigenous signification. See also the discussion by Besnier, Brownell and Carter 2018, 50.
- 103 Mann 2010 and 2011; Carter 2010.

- 104 Livy 41.20, 10–13.
- 105 *Res Gestae* 22.
- 106 Many Greek agonistic festivals were connected to imperial cult too, including festivals established during the Roman period or older festivals, which often had the epithet Augusteia or Sebastia added to their name.
- 107 See Carter 2004.
- 108 *IGR* 3.492.
- 109 *IK Mylasa* 531.
- 110 For *munera* and *venationes* in Mylasa see Rumscheid and Rumscheid 2001; Aubriet 2011.
- 111 *MAMA* XI.3, 19–20 ἐπιδόσεις καὶ εὐεργεσίας, second or third century CE. Cf. *IK Smyrna* 637 for *munera* lasting five days.
- 112 Bosch 1967, no. 101. Most of the priests of the imperial cult in Ankyra who sponsored *munera* and *venationes* were of Celtic origin. Some had taken up Greek names, see Mitchell 1993, 107–112.
- 113 Thirty pairs, Bosch 1967, no. 51, IV and XIV; 50 pairs, Bosch 1967, no. 51, IX. See also Bosch 1967, no. 51, X for the sponsorship of 25 and 10 pairs of gladiators.
- 114 Bosch 1967, no. 51, IV; V; VI; IX.
- 115 Robert 1940, no. 98.
- 116 Greek-style *agones*: Bosch 1967, no. 51, VI; oil provision: Bosch 1967, no. 51, VI, VIII, IX, X, XI, XII, XV.
- 117 See Mitford 1991, no. 12, 199/200 CE; for the text and commentary see also Le Guen-Pollet 1989, no. 10.
- 118 Velenis 1999. For text and commentary see also *SEG* 49.815–817 and *L'Année épigraphique* 1999 (2002), nos. 1425–1427. The three inscriptions can be accurately dated to 252 CE (*SEG* 49.815), 259 CE (*SEG* 49.816) and 260 CE (*SEG* 49.817).
- 119 *Agonothetes* for Alexandria games, *SEG* 49.815 and 817; *agonothetes* for the Caesareia Pythia, *SEG* 49.816 and 817.
- 120 *SEG* 49.815.
- 121 For other examples of public adverts of *munera* and *venationes* *IK Smyrna* 835; 836; 837; 838; 840.
- 122 Spectacles in Thessaloniki, 259 CE, *SEG* 49.816; 260 CE, *SEG* 49.817.
- 123 *I. Magnesia* 163.
- 124 *IK Selge* 20, c. 225–250 CE.
- 125 For more examples of sponsors of Greek *agones* and Roman *muneral/venationes* see *CIL* III.6835–6837, Antioch in Pisidia, mid-second century CE; Bean and Mitford 1970, no. 19, Pamphylia, c. 220–240 CE with comments in *IK Side* TEp 1.
- 126 *IK Side* 112, third century CE.
- 127 *IK Tralleis* 148; see P. Herrmann 1988 and Hirt 2010, 115–117.
- 128 Philostr. *VA* 4.22. See Carter 2010 for a discussion.
- 129 For a discussion of the structural adaptations of the theater of Dionysus in Athens to accommodate *munera* see Welch 2007, 165–178.
- 130 Dodge 2009.
- 131 Welch 1998; Dodge 2014, 567–568.
- 132 In *IK Laodikeia am Lykos* 15 the stadium is described as στάδιον ἀμφιθέατρον. See Dodge 2014, 569.
- 133 *SEG* 32.605, second half of second century CE. For other examples of gladiators and *venatores* in stadia see *IG* IX.2.644, Larissa; *IK Iznik Nikaia* 277; *IScM* II.340 Tomis (Constanța), second–third century CE; Anderson, Cumont and Grégoire 1910, 109, Amasia; *TAM* II.355, Xanthos; Bosch 1967, 150, end of second century CE.

Epilogue

It is a central tenet of the present book that because of its popularity and longevity, both as practice and spectacle, Greek sport is a very suitable and promising entry-point for exploring aspects of the articulation and development of identities in the Greek world. That is because “sports are vehicles and embodiments of meaning, whose status and interpretation is continually open to negotiation and subject to conflict.”¹ Building on the advances of scholarship on identity and cultural performance, the preceding chapters engaged in an exploration of facets of the articulation and representation of multiple identities through the embodied performance of sport in the ancient Greek world. Sport as practiced by the upper social echelons in the Homeric epics emphasized elements of elite exceptionalism as well as a trail-blazing articulation of a pattern of sport as a class-exclusive practice of social distinction that remained influential for some elites until the end of the Archaic period and, in isolated cases, for longer after that. At the same time, many athletes hailing from the ruling elite of Greek communities were mindful, starting at the late Archaic period, of the growing social trends towards egalitarianism. They thus actively engaged and appropriated facets of the middling discourse in law, politics and other aspects of social life by projecting individual athletic and equestrian victories as an integral part of a family tradition and, equally importantly, also as an organic component of civic ideology and values.

Also starting in the late Archaic period one can observe the trend for civic authorities to be in the forefront of religious and agonistic life through their sponsorship of activities in *gymnasia* and agonistic festivals. This was partly in response to the growing popularity of sport among Greeks from all walks of life. Evidence suggests the existence of a core of committed and well-informed sport spectators as well as a larger group of occasional spectators who attended and enjoyed games, as well as other sponsored activities, in local agonistic festivals. It is understandable, therefore, why cities, leagues and sanctuaries tried to maintain and enhance, at all costs, the reputation and program of their festivals. In turn, participation in local and translocal festivals was acknowledged as a major signifier of group – be that ethnic, city or social class – membership. Stories of participation and victory in the Olympic games as tokens of Hellenicity abound, as do examples of civic entities who did everything necessary to revive festivals that had

lapsed due to warfare or other contingencies. Fostering a sense of communal belonging was paramount, as was the need to juxtapose the community to the “Other.” As it has been convincingly demonstrated “Otherness is visibly expressed in the public spectacles of sport, making sport a resilient site for the power and desire that are served by marking Others as different.”²

An additional theme explored in this book is how the construction of identities through Greek sport was underpinned by power relations. The discussion of this theme revolved around the duality of institutional power and agency, in this instance as manifested through the establishment of regulatory frameworks of Greek sport. Viewed from a historical perspective, the creation of the network of local and interstate festivals was greatly facilitated by the establishment, already in the Archaic period, of a set of universally accepted technical rules for sporting events as well as of a basic framework of administration for local and interstate *agones*, implemented through boards of officials and other specialist personnel. A host of other informal norms and expectations on athletic practices, what I have called cultural norms on Greek sport, were also in place. At times there was great divergence between the cultural norms that dictated the practice of sport from city to city, and hence it is these sets of norms that largely account for the diversity of sporting practices at the local level. Such localized cultural norms were often translated into legally endorsed regulatory frameworks, e.g. foundations that sponsored the expenses but also dictated the terms of the operation of a local *gymnasion*. Local games with customized regulatory frameworks, e.g. imposing restrictions on competition on the basis of citizenship or membership in civic sub-groups, were another instance of the recalibration of cultural norms into the regulatory framework governing the operation of games. The process of implementing cultural norms in a formal – i.e. legally endorsed – or informal manner was therefore intimately intertwined with identity construction at the individual and collective level. And since identity construction is shifting and dynamic in nature, in particular how identities are subject to reprioritization and change, it was to be expected that the perception and implementation of cultural norms on sport were also transformed over time.³ In the words of Stuart Hall, “[p]recisely because identities are constructed within, not outside, discourse, we need to understand them as produced in specific historical and institutional sites within specific discursive formations and practices, by specific enunciative strategies.”⁴ Especially during the Hellenistic and Imperial periods, a time of often unsettling political fluidity and expanding multiculturalism, the need to set up social and cultural markers was perceived by many as more urgent than ever. Sport, with its ubiquity and popularity, was indeed the ideal vehicle to pursue that objective.

It is not an accident that a particular social group – the wealthy ruling elites of the Greek cities of the eastern Mediterranean – appear in our record as catalytic in the movement to reinforce sport as a leading cultural determinant in the post-Classical eras. The same group also led the way – often in a theatrically innovative manner – in the politics of representation of sport and the body, especially during the late

Hellenistic and Imperial periods. Sport, in all its manifestations, is the embodied performance *par excellence* and hence the athletic body was the fulcrum of identity construction through sport, especially regarding the articulation of self and social perceptions of gender identities. In the preceding pages I have discussed select aspects of how corporeality and athletic practice were represented in literary discourses, especially in connection with Classical Athens and its orthodoxies of citizen agency and participation in civic life. The theme of corporeality is also prominent in the life-narratives of elite achievements, encountered primarily in honorary inscriptions paid for and erected by grateful communities but also at times by the honorees themselves and their families. These epigraphic discourses focus on aspects of somatic performance, such as pain and endurance, that were considered critical in the field of athletics but also in the performance of public offices. In this manner, the body was perceived as successfully transitioning from the role of *gymnasion* trainee – or even better, athlete in contests – to that of public figure, roles that male civic elites were expected to embody in the course of their lives.

In addition to holding public office and promoting the status of their community in interstate relationships, civic elites were also expected to be active in the field of benefaction. For elites in Greek cities of the Imperial period *euergetism* was a resource and a medium through which power, including the articulation of identities and status claims, was publicly instantiated. Agonistic *euergetism*, especially through the financial sponsorship of the operation of a *gymnasion* or the organization of agonistic festivals, was a major component of the public persona of the munificent aristocrat. Once again, a personal or familial athletic background, manifested through victories in games or merely a record of toilsome training in the *gymnasion* in one's adolescent years, enhanced a benefactor's standing. Especially regarding benefactions in the *gymnasion*, they were usually couched in an unmitigated light of betterment and a high valuation of the common good.

The sponsorship of festivals, through the establishment of richly endowed foundations or the undertaking of *agonothesia*i was another way for the elites to negotiate localized (i.e. civic) and transcended (i.e. translocal) identities. In addition to putting their city on the map of the complex international network of interstate games – the letters of Hadrian of 134 CE demonstrate how competitive this process was – sponsors of local games frequently oversaw the metamorphosis of these festive rituals into liminal occasions that engaged subaltern groups (women, foreigners, slaves) and often questioned entrenched orthodoxies of social organization. As a result many civic agonistic festivals shifted away from being a simplistic and unilateral top-down imposition of elite norms and social configurations and became instead collective and reflexive sites that provided the resources for negotiating identity and enacting agency.

It is worth noting that women were active in the practices of Greek sport as competitors in running events for young girls and, more frequently, as participants in the inclusive festive culture of festivals. On such occasions, women were often invited – at times by special dispensation of an *agonothetes* or the donor behind a foundation – to partake of iconic tokens of male athletic

culture, e.g. anointing oil in *gymnasia*, baths or other civic venues. Moreover, we know of many cases whereby women of all legal statuses were invited to banquets and were provided with gifts and monetary donations on special festival days. It is a testament to the potent cultural power of sport that many women from elite families became actively involved in the sponsorship of *gymnasia* and *agones*, through *gymnasiarchiai* and *agonothesia*i. Moreover, women during the Imperial period, irrespective of their involvement in the dominant athletic culture, were often represented in language and imagery (e.g. wreaths) that were originally established to celebrate male athletes and sponsors. This appropriation and amalgamation of a dominant agonistic discourse in the narrative of paradigmatic femininity could only have been possible in the era of the most rapid expansion of Greek agonistic culture, i.e. in the Imperial period.

During the same period, and especially during the second and third centuries CE benefactors and audiences in the Greek-speaking East became enthralled with Roman spectacles. To paraphrase Peter Burke, this was cultural change through addition rather than substitution.⁵ The popularity of Greek sport during this period, in other words, never ceased or even diminished. Rather, Roman spectacles were added to the slew of popular entertainments that audiences in Greek cities expected. That penchant for gladiatorial shows and *venationes*, as well as the discourse of representation of the *editores* (of both genders) who sponsored such spectacles as well as of the performers who performed in them, suggest a hybrid culture of sport and spectacle that integrated both Greek and Roman elements. In some cases this symbiosis of Greek and Roman sport outlasted the formal end of many facets of the social, economic and political *status quo* of the ancient world.

In this book I have attempted to build on recent scholarship by elaborating on issues already discussed and by suggesting some alternative avenues of interpretation on less explored topics. Like the festivals that hosted Greek *agones*, the field of ancient Greek sport history is a dynamic and reflexive one. The quantity of scarcely analyzed material and the steady stream of new discoveries – primarily epigraphic and archaeological – heralds a prolific future of fruitful and intellectually stimulating debates.

Notes

- 1 MacClancy 1996, 7–8.
- 2 Besnier, Brownell and Carter 2018, 125.
- 3 On the issue of identity construction and reprioritization over time from a comparative perspective see Harris and Parker 2009, as well as other studies in the same volume.
- 4 S. Hall 1996, 4.
- 5 Burke 2009, 44.

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